The University of Sydney – National Taiwan University Ignition Grants
Guidelines for Applicants

1. Purpose

1.1. The University of Sydney (Sydney) and National Taiwan University (NTU) have identified each other as strategic partners to foster deep collaborations in research and education.

1.2. The University of Sydney – National Taiwan University Ignition Grants have been established to facilitate and support joint initiatives that will strengthen the two universities' strategic priorities as well as develop multi-disciplinary innovative research to create academic and societal impact.

1.3. Applicants are encouraged to submit funding proposals for innovative and sustainable programs built around collaborative research linking the University of Sydney and National Taiwan University.

1.4. In this round, **up to five(5) proposals** may receive up to the equivalent of **AUD 10,000 (NTD 200,000) from each university** for a total of approximately AUD 20,000 (NTD 400,000) for each proposal.
- These proposals must be led by two Chief Investigators; one from Sydney and one from NTU.
- All projects supported by these Ignition Grants are expected to lead to publication outputs and leverage external international funding. Evidence of external funding submissions will be required in final project reports.
- Projects which are multidisciplinary in nature are encouraged.
- Proposals which seek to address the UN's Sustainable Development Goals are highly encouraged.
- Preference will be given to teams which include PhD or Masters by Research students, Postdocs, and Early- and Mid-Career Researchers (EMCRs), rather than one-to-one research projects. Preference is given to applications involving new collaborations and to projects led by researchers within 10 years of receiving their PhD.
- Priority will also be given to new projects and to applicants who have not previously received support under this scheme, in order to broaden participation and foster new collaborations.

2. Eligibility

2.1. Proposals are invited from academic staff from all disciplines at the University of Sydney and National Taiwan University and their affiliated Research Centres and Institutes.

2.2. Applicants from the affiliated University of Sydney Research Centres and Institutes must be University Title Holders.

2.3. Chief Investigators
- **Sydney**: Chief Investigators must be employed on a full-time, part-time (appointed at least 0.5 FTE), fixed term or continuing basis. If on a fixed term contract, the end date must be beyond the funding period.
- **NTU**: Chief Investigators must be tenure-track faculty member and not on sabbatical leave throughout the project period.

2.4. Higher Degree Research students and research assistants/associates are not eligible to apply as Chief Investigators, but they are encouraged to join the applications.

2.5. Sydney Chief Investigators may not hold more than one award from the Office of Global & Research Engagement at the same time. Those who currently hold other funding from this Office may apply for the Sydney-NTU Ignition Grants only if their existing project will be completed prior to the commencement of the new project. Applicants in this category are required to submit a progress report as part of their application. The report should be a single-page narrative outlining the progress to date and the unexpended award balance and must be attached to the application at the time of submission.

2.6. Sydney Chief Investigators who have previously received funding from the Sydney Office of Global & Research Engagement and have completed their project may apply for the Sydney-NTU Ignition Grants only if the final report for the previous project has been submitted.

2.7. Each Chief Investigator from Sydney and NTU can only submit one application per round of the Ignition Grants.

3. Duration

3.1. Projects may run from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2026.

3.2. Funding from Sydney must be expended and charged to the nominated project account of the Chief Investigator by **1 December 2026**.

3.3. Funding from NTU must be expended by **31 December 2026**.

4. Important Dates

Applications open	22 September 2025
Applications close	31 October 2025, 11:59pm AEDT / 8:59pm TST
Successful applicants notified	mid-December 2025
Latest date for projects to start	31 January 2026
Latest date for projects to end	31 December 2026
Final reports due	31 March 2027
Final reports update	31 March 2028

5. Eligible Grant Activities

5.1. Expenses/activities **eligible** for **Sydney** funding include:
- Airfares: Only travel on economy class will be considered for funding. Applicants must clearly indicate the traveller's name, career stage, and the planned dates and duration of travel in the budget submission.
- Other travel expenses (e.g. train, rental car)
- Costs for hosting seminars/conferences or workshops. Applicants must clearly indicate the planned dates and place of the event.
- Accommodation and subsistence
- Consumables (a detailed justification of the consumables to be purchased should be included in the Supplementary Budget Information section.)
- Publications and printing costs.

5.2. Expenses/activities **eligible** for **NTU** funding include:
- Airfares: Only travel on economy class will be considered
- Other travel expenses (e.g. train, rental car)
- Costs for hosting seminars/conferences or workshops in Taiwan. Applicants must clearly indicate the planned dates and place of the event.
- Joint virtual events (conference, workshop, webinar, forum, symposium)
- Accommodation and subsistence whilst travelling abroad
- Hosting foreign, non-NTU scholars (daily stipend in principle)
- Fieldwork

5.3. All travel activities must comply with the guidelines of the respective universities.
- **Sydney:** All Sydney travel must comply with the [Travel Policy 2018](#) and follow all relevant processes and policies, including travel insurance as outlined on the [Travel intranet page](#). Sydney researchers should refer to www.smartraveller.gov.au for the latest visa and travel advice.
- **NTU:** All NTU expenses and travel must comply with Ministry of Education regulations and other relevant NTU Office of International Affairs regulations.

5.4. Activities **not eligible** for Sydney and NTU funding:
- General teaching
- Individual staff member's research projects, unless as catalytic funding for the establishment of an international research collaboration with the prospect of external funding
- Event registration fees
- Website development
- Hiring of Research Fellows or Research Assistants
- Salaries or salary supplementation, and honoraria
- Scholarships for students
- Course fees for international students
- Bench fees
- Mobile phone cards
- Entertainment costs
- Computers, including laptops (excluding access to high-performance computers or other specialised applications that are justified by the project) and basic computing facilities such as printers, word processing and other standard software.

6. Submission Requirements

6.1. All applications must be jointly submitted by a Chief Investigator from Sydney and a Chief Investigator from NTU online via the Funding Schemes Site at http://sydney.edu.au/award-schemes with the following elements:

- **Ignition Grants Application Form (online)**
  - Details of team involved and the role and contribution of each member
  - Project details (title, abstract, description in layman's terms)
  - Expected outcomes
  - Selection criteria (see point 7)
  - Project timeline
  - Project budget

- **CV of the Sydney Chief Investigator** (maximum two pages in length) which should include:
  - Qualifications, current position, and employment history
  - 10 career-best publications
  - Awards and relevant presentations
  - Current grant income
  - Collaborative track record (limited to 200 words)

- **CV of the NTU Chief Investigator** (maximum two pages in length) which should include:
  - Qualifications, current position, and employment history
  - 10 career-best publications
  - Awards and relevant presentations
  - Current grant income
  - Collaborative track record (limited to 200 words)

- All applications require the endorsement by the relevant University of Sydney Head of School. A pre-filled Endorsement Coversheet is automatically generated by the application system after completion of the Ignition Grants Application Form (online) and sent to the Sydney Chief Investigator's email for this purpose. The signed coversheet must be uploaded before submission. Digital signatures are acceptable. To ensure sufficient time for endorsement, it is highly recommended that the Endorsement Coversheet and a downloaded copy of the completed online application be provided to the Head of School well in advance of the application deadline.

- Additional collaborators from other universities are welcome to be involved. A brief letter of support in English on official letterhead from any additional institution / organisation (other than Sydney or NTU) that intends to formally collaborate, outlining any collaboration activity to date and specifying their contribution to the program (in cash or kind). Please note that any additional institution or organisation will be responsible for covering its own costs associated with the project.

6.2. A copy of the questions included in the online application form (including budget) is available for preview from the Sydney Funding Schemes Site at http://sydney.edu.au/award-schemes .

6.3. All applications must be submitted online via the Sydney Funding Schemes Site at http://sydney.edu.au/award-schemes.

6.4. Applications can only be initiated by the Chief Investigator from Sydney using their UniKey and password. Chief Investigators from NTU and strategic partner universities may only access and edit the applications after invitation from Sydney Chief Investigators to be a "Collaborator" of the application.

6.5. Only complete submissions will be considered.

6.6. Late applications will not be considered.

7. Scoring and Selection Criteria

7.1. Priority is given to applications that align with the strategic research areas of both universities. Applications in other fields showing good prospect of sustainability are also welcome.

7.2. Criteria do not have weightings; proposals are assessed holistically. Each proposal will be assessed according to the selection criteria described below.

Score	Category	Justification
9-10	Excellent	Proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor
7-8	Very Good	Proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
4-6	Good	Proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
1-3	Weak	Criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses

Selection Criteria	Description
Quality & Relevance (300-word maximum)	• Clearly describe the objectives and methodology to be employed with the project. The alignment with strategic priorities and the objectives of the funding scheme will be considered in combination with the soundness of the concept and credibility of the proposed methodology. (Note: Proposals should use clear writing appropriate for non-specialists and make a strong case for the importance of the project to reviewers outside the discipline. It is strongly advised that the proposals avoid jargon and unexplained abbreviations). • Explain how the participants in the research team will bring together the necessary expertise to carry out the project. The 2-page CVs of the Chief Investigators will be taken into consideration.
Execution (300-word maximum)	• Elaborate on the workplan and milestones outlined in the timeframe (there are separate sections in the application form for an outline of activities in the Timeline and Budget). Proposed timeframes and budget estimates should be realistic and appropriate. • Outline the long-term plan for engagement to attract research funding and produce publications. Proposals must include a specific and concrete plan for how the project will become sustainable. Elaborate on why the project will be competitive for future funding. • This section should also address the appropriateness of the allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants [including PhD or masters by research students, postdocs, Early and Mid-Career Researchers (EMCR)[1], and any researchers on Sabbatical Leave] have a valid role and there are adequate resources in the project to enable them to fulfil that role.
Impact (300-word maximum)	• Outline what the participants will gain from the project and how it will contribute to the discipline and field of research. • Explain how the project will establish or strengthen a durable cooperation between the universities and participants. • Explain how the project will impact beyond the academic sphere (i.e. benefit society, address global challenges, Sustainable Development Goals, etc).

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[1] Early-Career Researchers are defined as those within 10 years of award of PhD and Mid-Career Researchers are defined as those between 10-15 years of award of PhD.

8. Expected Outcomes

Capturing the outcomes of successful projects is vital in helping to measure the overall success and impact of the Ignition Grants. Expected outcomes could include one or more of the following:

Category	Outcome
Research quality and influence	The research: • will advance knowledge in the field which addresses an issue of importance • may result in fundamental outcomes • is innovative in concept • will use well established approaches to good effect
Publications	**At least one** (1) refereed publication in a nationally/internationally recognised scholarly journal
External funding	**At least one** (1) Category 1-3[2] national/international competitive grant submission Details of the external funding bodies to which you plan to submit applications must be identified within the application form, and evidence of external funding submissions will be required in final project reports.
Optional	
Training & education	Supervision and mentoring of PhD students/postdoctoral researchers/ECRs
Joint Workshop	Organise at least one (1) joint workshop at either institution. This may be in-person, virtual or hybrid.
Conference	At least one (1) conference presentation. This may be online.

Industry engagement is encouraged but not expected. If proposals include industry engagement, then details should be provided in the timeline/activities section of the online application.

9. Assessment Process

Award selection will be made by a joint committee formed by members of both universities, which reserves final authority over the selection of projects taking into account university and faculty strategic priorities, and the availability of funds.

10. Notification of Application Outcomes

Successful applicants will receive a letter of award outlining the process to accept the award. Successful applicants will be required to accept their offer by the due date stated in their letter of award. Feedback on individual applications will not be provided.

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[2] Category 1: Australian Competitive Grant Research Income. For example, the ARC, NHMRC, MRFF, etc.
Category 2: Other Public Sector Research Funding. Other Australian Government schemes and business enterprises and State and local governments and partly government-owned or funded bodies.
Category 3: Industry and other Funding for Research. Research grants or contract research with Australian or international industry or non-Australian Government agencies. Funding through donations, bequests, charities and foundations (both Australian and international).

11. Change of Investigator
Applicants should contact the Program Coordinator at each institution. Such changes will need to be approved and documented.

12. Availability of Grants
12.1. The maximum amount that applicants can request for projects is AUD 10,000 from Sydney and NTD 200,000 from NTU.

12.2. **Sydney**: Funding from Sydney is available until **1 December 2026**. The nominated university Responsibility Centre (RC) account code will be linked to a new Project Code (PC) which will be created for the Chief Investigator by the Office of Global and Research Engagement. The RC PC account must be used solely for the purposes of this grant and may be subject to internal audit processes to ensure adherence to the guidelines. Each month, funds matching actual expenditure from the previous month will be transferred into the Chief Investigator's university project account by Corporate Finance. The transfer of funds will cease when the awarded amount is reached or 1 December 2026, whichever comes first. Any expenditure above the awarded amount will need to be cleared to another Faculty/School account (such as consulting or other as appropriate). Please be advised that any unspent funding **cannot be carried over to 2027**. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that awardees fully utilize the funds within the allocated timeframe, ensure all claims are approved, and have expenditures charged to the Chief Investigator's nominated project account by 1 December 2026. This is to guarantee the expenses count against the funding that has been awarded.

12.3. **NTU**: Grants from NTU not spent by **31 December 2026** must be returned so that unspent balances can be re-allocated.

13. Financial and Reporting Obligations
13.1. The funding should only be used for the approved project and in accordance with the proposal and the budget plan. It must not be used for any other purposes and prior approval is needed for any variation in the budget items. Request for variations from original proposals must be submitted to both universities for approval.

13.2. Awardees should adhere to the purchasing guidelines of the respective universities to which reimbursement is to be sought. Reimbursement of each expenditure item will be capped at the approved amount.

13.3. All awardees must submit a final report using the report pro-forma online through the Funding Schemes Site. The final report must be completed by **31 March 2027** and an update to the final report must be submitted before **31 March 2028**.

13.4. Awardees from Sydney must complete the acquittal of awarded funds in consultation with their Finance Manager, by **31 March 2027** and provide a statement as part of their final report. An acquittal statement template is provided with the report pro-forma online through the Funding Schemes Site which is linked to your application. This is not required for recipients from NTU.

13.5. Failure to submit a completed report will result in all members of the project team being ineligible to submit future funding applications and, for successful applicants from University of Sydney,

mention of the Ignition Grants will be removed from their University of Sydney online Academic Profile.

13.6. The activation of research funding accounts is not tied to ethics/other approvals being obtained. It is the responsibility of Chief Investigators to ensure that no work requiring approval is commenced until such approvals are in place.

14. Research Integrity and Ethics

14.1. All applications and the funded research projects must comply with the relevant research integrity and ethics requirements and policies of both universities and the laws of the jurisdiction.

14.2. **Sydney:** Please contact Research Integrity and Ethics Administration in the Research Portfolio to obtain ethical approval as appropriate. Ethical approval is evidenced by the submission of a completed Research Proposal Clearance Form with Ethics Reference Numbers, signed by all Sydney Chief Investigators and their respective Heads of School. All applications and the funded research projects must comply with the University's Research Data Management Policy and Procedure. Sydney applicants are strongly encouraged to consider whether data sharing is required, or the nature of any data that needs to be accessed from NTU. Please contact Manager, Research Data Governance if advice is needed.

14.3. It is the responsibility of Chief Investigators to ensure that no work is commenced until such approvals are in place.

15. International collaboration policies and procedures

15.1. All applications and the funded research projects must comply with the relevant international collaboration policies and procedures of both universities and relevant laws and guidelines of both governments.

15.2. **Sydney:** All applications and the funded research projects must comply with the University of Sydney's relevant policies and procedures, including and not limited to International Collaboration Principles, Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021, External Interests Policy 2010. Please visit the "International collaboration page" in the Staff Intranet to ensure the project meets the standard set by the University, and complies with Australian law and government guidelines, carry out due diligence checks, receive all necessary approvals and make any required notifications or declarations.

16. Intellectual Property

All activities in connection with any Projects will be conducted in accordance with the following key principles specified in the Partnership Cooperation Agreement signed by both institutions unless otherwise agreed in writing between the institutions:

- any intellectual property created in the course of a project (Project IP) will be owned by the Institution who creates such Project IP, or where created jointly, owned jointly by the Institutions as tenants in common in shares equal to their respective inventive contributions to such Project IP;
- each Institution grants to the other Institution a free, non-exclusive, perpetual licence, without the right to sublicense, to use its Project IP for the purposes of undertaking the project and for its general purposes of research, teaching and publication; and

- where relevant or necessary, any commercialisation activities in respect of jointly-owned Project IP (including whether patent applications related to the jointly-owned Project IP will be prepared and filed) will be as negotiated and agreed between the Institutions.

17. Extensions
Only under exceptional circumstances will extensions be approved. Requests for extensions must be submitted to the Program Coordinators in writing at least 2 months before project end date and include a revised budget and timeline of activities for consideration.

18. Marketing and Communications
Sydney recipients may be contacted by University of Sydney Marketing and Communications for the purposes of promoting their successful funding application and informing others of their research.

19. Publications
19.1. Any publications (e.g. abstracts, articles) or dissemination (e.g. public presentations) arising from activities supported by the Ignition Grants should acknowledge assistance received. The standard acknowledgment is "The University of Sydney–National Taiwan University Ignition Grants".

19.2. Copies or notifications should be submitted to the Office of Global and Research Engagement at the University of Sydney and Office of International Affairs at National Taiwan University.

Further Information
For further information please contact the Program Coordinators:

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