

2025 National Taiwan University-University of Illinois System Joint Research and Innovation Seed Grants Program Call for Proposals

National Taiwan University (NTU) and the University of Illinois System (U of I) have launched the Joint Research and Innovation Seed Grants Program for university research scientists. This program aims to facilitate both research and development cooperation and delivery of talent, innovations, and resources from these universities to the marketplace. The program will be interdisciplinary in nature. The goal of these awards is to promote economic development through research and development of innovative technologies, while facilitating cooperation between the two universities.

NTU and U of I have together committed to fund up to two selected proposals and offer **up to USD \$60,000 (NTD \$1,800,000)**, shared equally by NTU and U of I. Each approved project will receive a total grant of USD \$30,000 (approximately NTD \$900,000), with USD \$15,000 (NTD \$450,000) awarded to the NTU Principal Investigator and USD \$15,000 (NTD \$450,000) awarded to the U of I Principal Investigator. A maximum of two projects will be funded. Applications should be jointly submitted by NTU and U of I faculty. NTU Office of International Affairs (OIA) and U of I Office of the Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation (OVPEDI) will administer the program.

1. Priority Areas

1.1 Priority focus areas for the program include **Health & Medicine, Data Science & AI, Sustainability, Quantum & Semiconductor, and Social Science**; both universities' worldwide reputation and standing in these topic areas made them clear choices for this seed grant program.

2. Eligibility

2.1 Both NTU and U of I applicants must be full-time, tenure track faculty members for the duration of the funding period.

2.2 Each project must have at least one NTU principle investigator (PI) and one U of I PI.

3. Funding Information

3.1 Each approved project will receive a total grant of USD \$30,000 (approximately NTD \$900,000), with USD \$15,000 (NTD \$450,000) awarded to the NTU Principal Investigator and USD \$15,000 (NTD \$450,000) awarded to the U of I Principal Investigator.

3.2 A maximum of two projects will be funded. The number of projects funded will be determined by mutual agreement between NTU and U of I.

3.3 Funding period at U of I is two years, starting from March 1, 2026 and ending on February 28, 2028. At NTU, Funding period is 22 months, starting from March 1, 2026 and ending on December 31, 2027. Unless jointly approved by the coordinators, there will be no extensions beyond this timeframe.

3.4 Funding not spent by the end of the funding period must be returned so that unspent balances can be re-allocated.

- 3.5 Funding covers international travel by university faculty members and students, hosting scholars from the other university (daily stipends in principle), international events, meetings, personnel expenses¹ for postdocs and student workers (no faculty salaries), supplies, and additional expenses that are necessary to move research forward.
- 3.6 Funding does not cover indirect cost recoveries (ICR).
- 3.7 Funding should only be utilized for the selected proposal and approved budget plan.
- 3.8 All expenses must comply with the guidelines of the respective universities to which reimbursement is to be sought.

4. Application Information

- 4.1 All proposals must be jointly submitted by NTU faculty member(s) and U of I faculty member(s).
- 4.2 All proposals must address the commercial viability of the project, technical details and overall planning, the clarification of intellectual property rights that are likely to be generated (position and strategy), and plans for securing funding for the project at the end of this seed grant and other forms of commercial discussion that are envisioned.
- 4.3 All proposals should clearly explain the motivation for holding the activity, including how the relevant NTU and U of I institutes or departments are involved and can benefit in the long term from this cooperation and what synergies can arise.
- 4.4 Proposed activities should have a clearly defined focus with scientific and technical merit, demonstrate innovation and economic impact, and serve as a catalyst for moving research forward to a path of commercialization (when relevant).
- 4.5 Proposed activities can take place either at NTU or U of I.
- 4.6 Proposed activities' inclusion of third parties is permitted; however, the additional costs must be covered by these parties themselves.
- 4.7 All proposals must include the following sections:
 - 4.7.1 Executive Summary
 - 4.7.2 Project description/narrative (up to 5 pages) including:
 - a. Clearly formulated project plan and goals
 - b. Innovation and Commercialization potential and benefits
 - c. Plan to assess effectiveness of proposal outcome
 - 4.7.3 Project timeline (max. two-year funding period) (1 page)
 - 4.7.4 Project Budget (USD) (2 pages each) breakdown following the attached template, including equal distribution of funding between:

¹ Please note that at maximum only one-thirds of NTU funding may be utilized for personnel expenses per project.

- a. NTU (USD)²
- b. U of I (USD)

4.7.5 Description of NTU and U of I PI's research profiles (interdisciplinary nature, excellence of project leaders, scope of the fields/labs represented in the proposed activity) and synergy between them (1 page each)

4.7.6 Information on how the cooperation can be sustained beyond the initial seed funding phase; plans for securing funding for the project at the end of this seed grant and other forms of commercial discussion that are envisioned (1 page)

4.7.7 How intellectual property will be addressed (1 page)

4.7.8 Written endorsement statement of respective NTU/U of I heads of faculty/department/institute

4.8 To apply, joint project proposals should be submitted to the [online application system](#).

4.9 Late applications will not be considered.

5. Selection and Result Notification

- 5.1 Proposal selection will be made by a joint selection committee consisting of NTU and U of I representatives.
- 5.2 Selection of representatives will be coordinated by NTU OIA and the U of I System OVPEDI.
- 5.3 The joint selection committee reserve the final authority over the proposal selection taking into account university and faculty strategic priorities and the availability of funding.
- 5.4 Priority will be given to interdisciplinary proposals.
- 5.5 Priority will be given to applicants who have not received previous support within this funding scheme.
- 5.6 Funding will be provided on a competitive basis, following the selection criteria below:

Criterion	%
Scientific merit, technical merit, excellence of innovation potential, potential impact	40%
Clear plan and goals for the activity during the two-year program	20%
Description of the NTU and U of I PI's research profiles (interdisciplinary nature, excellence of project leaders, scope of the fields/labs represented in the proposed activity) and synergy between them	25%
Information on how the cooperation can be sustained beyond the initial seed funding phase; plans for securing funding for the project at the end of this seed grant and other forms of	15%

² Please note that NTU funding will be dispensed or reimbursed in New Taiwan Dollar (NTD).

commercial discussion that are envisioned. Suitable outline of how the commercialization or the generation of the listed benefits will be achieved, if applicable. Plans to assess and validate the quality and effectiveness of the project's outcomes.

5.7 Successful applicants will receive a letter of award outlining the process to accept the funding.

5.8 Feedback on individual applications will not be provided.

6. Intellectual Property

6.1 For purposes of this program, intellectual property will remain with the university that generated such intellectual property (what's mine is mine and what's yours is yours).

6.2 In the event that new intellectual property will be generated jointly by the universities from the seed grants, both universities will agree to reach a mutually beneficial agreement with respect to intellectual property ownership, management, protection and further development and exploitation.

7. Recipient Obligation

7.1 Recipients must mention the funding in all appropriate media, including any events arising from activities supported by this funding should include an acknowledgement of “NTU-U of I Joint Research and Innovation Seed Grants Program” and any publications/presentations arising from activities supported by this funding should include acknowledgement of “This publication/presentation is supported in part by the Joint Research and Innovation Seed Grants Program between National Taiwan University and the University of Illinois System.”

7.2 Recipients must submit a midterm technical and fiscal summary report/presentation by March 31, 2027 and a final technical and fiscal report by June 30, 2028.

7.3 Recipients must comply with all relevant laws and university regulations, including those relating to intellectual property, codes of conduct, etc.

8. Important Dates

For reference, the important dates of the 2025 round Joint Research and Innovation Seed Grants Program are as follows:

Milestones	Dates
Call for Proposals published	October 1, 2025
Project proposal submission deadline	December 8, 2025
Announcement of awards	February 2026
Proposed activities commence	March 1, 2026

9. Coordinator



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS SYSTEM

National Taiwan University

Wendy Chen

Office of International Affairs

Email: ntuglobalea@ntu.edu.tw

Phone: +886 (0) 2 3366 2007 ext 213



University of Illinois System

Heidi Leerkamp

Office of the Vice President for Economic
Development and Innovation

Email: leerkamp@uillinois.edu

Phone: +1-217-333-7774