**Tsinghua University - Cambridge University**

**Joint Research Initiative Fund in Sustainability and Future Emerging Technologies – Call for proposals 2019/20**

**BACKGROUND**

Tsinghua University (TSINGHUA) and Cambridge University (CAMBRIDGE) have recently agreed to establish the Tsinghua University - Cambridge University Joint Research Initiative Fund for five years from 2019/20 to 2023/24. The two universities will provide RMB 1 million and £ 100000 per year, respectively, to strengthen research collaborations between academics in the two institutions. The initiative reflects the commitment of both universities to work together on addressing global challenges, such as climate change, food security or infectious diseases. The broad theme of the initiative is in *sustainability and future emerging technologies*.

We are now seeking the support of colleagues to develop this important initiative. Participation from academics in all schools and departments in both universities is encouraged. There will be three or four further annual calls and we will be able to shape the programme in future years in response to experience gained with this first call and feedback and suggestions received from interested academics.

**SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES**

The initiative will support the expansion of existing collaborations between academics at the two universities but also the development of new collaborations in order to build a meaningful and productive strategic partnership between the two institutions. Examples of potential supported activities include:

* Faculty/staff mobility and visits
* Reciprocal visits /research exchanges by PhD students, post-doctoral and other researchers.
* Joint meetings and workshops of research groups.
* Invited lectures and seminars to establish strategic contacts between groups or individuals.
* Other forms of collaboration that meet the overall aims of the scheme.
* The partnership will be focused on research collaborations only and will not include undergraduate education.

Applicants are encouraged to think flexibly about how submissions are put together. Proposals need not be restricted to any one of the above, but could also be a combination. We are keen to support, whereever possible, whatever form of activity applicants think has the best chance of longer term success. Alternative ideas that depart significantly from the above should be discussed in advance with the respective academic lead: for Cambridge, Professor Henning Sirringhaus (hs220@cam.ac.uk), for Tsinghua Dr. Lu Xiaojun (Luxiaojun@tsinghua.edu.cn).

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

It is expected that there will be tangible outcomes of funded collaborations such as the *submission of co-authored publications, patent applications and/or joint applications for external grant funding*. It is hoped that projects could lead to long-lasting substantial collaborations that are maintained beyond the initial funding period and could be supported in the future by government, philanthropic, industrial or other external funding. Grants made by the programme are understood expressly as seed-funding and not as an end in themselves.

**ELIGIBLE RESOURCES AND GRANT SIZES**

Each institution should request resources to cover the costs for its own researchers to be involved in the collaboration. Eligible resources include:

* Travel costs of researchers and/or research students to visit the other institution.
* Reimbursement of living costs, bench fees and other costs incurred by researchers visiting the other institution.
* Funding for joint publications and patent applications.
* A limited amount of research consumables directly required for the collaborative research, this should not normally exceed 25% of the requested resources.
* Costs for seeding new joint projects
* Salaries of research staff and student stipends as well as equipment costs are not eligible.

Cambridge PIs should request funding for visits of Cambridge researchers to Tsinghua, while visits of Tsinghua researchers to Cambridge should be funded by Tsinghua. For example, Cambridge should NOT request flight and accommodation costs for Tsinghua researchers to stay in Cambridge, and vice versa. However, the costs of, for example, hosting a joint dinner with Tsinghua researchers in Cambridge, renting a venue for a joint meeting in Cambridge or research consumables incurred by the Tsinghua researchers while they are in Cambridge can be requested by Cambridge.

In this first call we envisage making between 10-20 awards and project costs should not exceed £12.5k for the Cambridge partners and RMB125k for the Tsinghua partners for this initial 15 months’ pilot phase (total budget less than £12.5k + RMB125k for the joint project). Applicants who have achieved the expected outcomes in this first phase may be invited to submit an extended project for consideration for funding in Year 2.

**RELEVANT DATES**

Each research proposal must be jointly prepared by PIs from both institutions and each PI must submit an application in English and Chinese, respectively, on the provided application form to his/her own institution by the deadline.

Initial Funding Period: 1 October 2019 - 31 December 2020 (15 months)

**Submission deadline: 30 August 2019, 5pm local time**

Notification date: 20 September 2019

Submission to be made to:

* + - Tsinghua University (In Chinese): Luxiaojun@tsinghua.edu.cn
    - Cambridge University (In English): tsinghua@admin.cam.ac.uk

**ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

Applications will be assessed by an assessment panel comprising academics from both institutions, including academics with the necessary expertise to judge the scientific merit of the proposals. The assessment panel will submit its recommendations to the Steering Committee, which will decide which projects to be funded and how much funding shall be allocated to each project.

Selection criteria will be:

1. Quality and potential impact of the proposed research programme;
2. Strength and complementarity of the research team brought together from both parties;
3. Likelihood that the proposed research program will achieve the expected outcomes in terms of co-authored publications, joint workshops or seminars, reciprocal visits by faculty, staff and students and joint applications for external grant funding;
4. Alignment of proposal with the broad strategic theme of the initiative.

**ANNUAL REPORT**

Successful applicants will be expected to submit a short report on their activities, the achieved outcomes as well as future plans and to attend (or send a representative to) a one-day workshop arranged near the end of the first year (details will be communicated when awards will be made). Applicants who have achieved the expected outcomes may be invited to submit an extended project for consideration for funding in Year 2.

**Tsinghua University - Cambridge University**

**Joint Research Initiative Fund Application Form**

**Project Title:**

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| --- |
|  |

**Project Team**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PI (CAMBRIDGE)** | |
| Name: | Department: |
| Email: | |
|  | |
| **PI (TSINGHUA)** | |
| Name: | Department: |
| Email: | |

**Other named investigators: CAMBRIDGE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name | School or Department |
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|  |  |
| **Other named investigators: TSINGHUA** | |
| Name | School or Department |
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**Theme Area (tick all that apply)**:

☐ Sustainability

☐ Future emerging technologies

**Part I: Case for Support**:

In no more than one page, provide details of:

* Proposed research collaboration and activity
* Alignment of project with theme
* How the project will lead to long term collaboration beyond the scope of the seed project
* Expected outcomes of seed grant funding, such as:
  + the submission of joint co-authored publications
  + reciprocal visits for staff and/or students
  + targeting a suitable scheme for the submission of a joint application for external research funding
* Requested resources: The English form should detail only resources requested by Cambridge. The Chinese form should detail resources requested by Tsinghua. Please break down the costs requested by category of expenditure.

**Part II: Track Record of Personnel**

For each PI named in the Project Team, please provide the following in no more than 2 pages per PI:

1. Resume
2. List of 10 most significant career Publications
3. List of Research Funding in the past 3 years:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description**  (all named investigators on any proposal or grant/ project/ fellowship in which a Participant is/was involved, project title, source of support and scheme) | **Year awardmade** | **Duration (years)** | **Total Value (£’000 or RMB)** |
| *Example: X. Wang and J Smith, New Energy Materials, National Research Corporation, Fundamental Projects* | *2018* | *4* | *£500,000* |
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