

2020 CALL FOR LETTERS OF INTENT (LOI) Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) Research Development Fund (RDF)



PURPOSE

The Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) office at the University of Alberta (UAlberta) has opened a call for letters of intent (LOI) for the WUN Research Development Fund (WUN RDF).

WORLDWIDE UNIVERSITIES NETWORK (WUN)

The WUN includes 23 research-intensive institutions spanning five continents and creates new multilateral opportunities for international collaboration in research and graduate education. Research activities are focused into four Global Challenges:

- Responding to Climate Change
- Understanding Cultures
- Global Higher Education and Research
- Public Health

Under the network's principal research theme of **Sustainable Development**, and using the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a point of reference, WUN is seeking proposals that address sustainable development (and **sustainable post-COVID recovery**) in one or more of the following areas:

- SDG#3: Good Health and Wellbeing**
- SDG#4: Quality Education**
- SDG#7: Affordable and Clean Energy**
- SDG#10: Reduced Inequalities**
- SDG#11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**
- SDG#13: Climate Action**

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FUND (RDF)

The WUN RDF offers **seed funding grants of up to £10,000** to launch longer-term research collaborations. Although matching funding from WUN members is not a requirement, the Office of the VPRI will contribute an additional \$5,000 to successful UA applications. Funds may be used to support such things as exploratory research initiatives, data collection, planning workshops, and the formation of collaborative networks.

Projects should be academically rigorous, and address problems of consequence within the broad theme of Sustainable Development. The project must engage **at least 3 WUN** member universities in at least 2 countries. The collaboration can include non-WUN universities and other external partners but must have an active core of WUN member universities.

Assessment Criteria:

- **Objectives** – the project addresses one or more of the identified UN SDGs, is of high academic quality, and addresses a new research problem or takes an existing WUN research program in a significantly new direction.
- **Teamwork** – the program involves a team of researchers drawn from a range of relevant regions and disciplines.
- **WUN Advantage** – the set of individuals involved, and/or the environment and resources available to them, confers a distinctive advantage in tackling the research problem.
- **Breadth of Impact** – the outcome of the project is likely to be of significant public interest.
- **Sustainability** – the research problem chosen lies within the scope of funding initiatives from national or international agencies, and project completion is likely to make the applicants competitive for such funds.

UAlberta Application Process and Deadlines:

The LOI is an informal, approximately one-page overview of your proposed research idea. **There is no template for the LOI but it should address the assessment criteria above, including which UN SDG(s) will be addressed, and the suggested key partners involved.** Feedback will be provided on the LOIs and full proposals.

- **August 31, 2020** – Submit one-page LOI to the UAlberta WUN Coordinator.
- **September 4, 2020** – LOI applicants will be notified regarding whether they are being invited to submit a full proposal. Two (2) LOIs will be selected to be developed into full proposals.
- **October 13, 2020** – Draft of full proposal should be complete online for review by the UAlberta WUN office and to obtain Faculty and RSO signatures prior to final submission.
- **October 23, 2020** – Online submission of complete application to WUN.
- **December 11, 2020** – Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by the WUN Secretariat. Funds will be available February 2021 and should be expended within 12 months.

Contact the local WUN office for advice or further information.

CONTACT

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