

2023 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 (UA) has opened a call for letters of intent (LOI) for the WUN Research Development Fund (WUN RDF).

WORLDWIDE UNIVERSITIES NETWORK (WUN)

WUN includes 24 research-intensive universities spanning six continents and creates new multilateral opportunities for international collaboration in research and graduate education. Research activities are focused on 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**, WUN is seeking proposals that address sustainable development in one or more of the following focus areas:

1. **Social justice and human rights; inequality**
2. **Sustainable world: cities and urbanization; energy transitions; water; and food security**
3. **Mental health; child and maternal health; ageing**
4. **Responsible and ethical applications of Artificial Intelligence**

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT FUND (RDF)

The WUN RDF offers **seed funding grants of up to £10,000** to launch longer-term research collaborations. Matching cash contributions from WUN members is encouraged but not a requirement. The Office of the VPRI will contribute \$5,000 to successful UA-led 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 regions. The collaboration can include non-WUN universities and other external partners but must have an active core of WUN member universities.

Assessment Criteria:

- **Academic quality** – Is the project academically rigorous, and address a new research problem or takes an existing WUN research program in a significantly new direction?
- **Relevance to call** – Does the project address a problem of consequence in one or more of the focus areas?
- **WUN Advantage** – Does the project demonstrate a distinct WUN advantage?
- **Research Team** – Does the project involve a well qualified team drawn from relevant disciplines and regions?
- **Impact** – What is the potential impact of the project? E.g., impactful publications, influence on policy, competitive for major funding calls.
- **Sustainable design** – Are resources used responsibly, taking into consideration environmental impact?

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 focus area(s) will be addressed, and the suggested key partners involved (if identified at this stage).** Feedback will be provided on the LOIs and full proposals.

- **August 25, 2023** – Submit one-page LOI to the UAlberta WUN Coordinator.
- **September 8, 2023** – 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, 2023** – Draft of full proposal should be complete online for review by the UAlberta WUN office and to complete the UA Research Services pre-submission process prior to final submission.
- **October 20, 2023** – Online submission of complete application to WUN.
- **December 15, 2023** – Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by the WUN Secretariat. Funds will be available February 2024 and should be expended within 12 months.

Contact the UAlberta WUN office for advice or further information.

CONTACT

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