

UUKi UK – France Science, Innovation, and Technology researcher mobility scheme

Guidelines

DEADLINE: Sunday 12 January 2025

Navigate to:

1. Background and overview of the scheme.....	2
2. Objectives and aims of the scheme	2
3. Eligibility	3
4. Available funding.....	4
5. Eligible costs and profile of spend	4
6. Terms of application	5
7. Data Protection	5
8. How to apply	6
9. Evaluation criteria	6
10. Timeline.....	6
11. Offer of award (including Terms and Conditions).....	7
12. Key call documents	7
13. About Universities UK International (UUKi).....	7
14. Contact	8
15. Applicant Eligibility checklist.....	8

1. Background and overview of the scheme

Following the UK-France bilateral research dialogue ([UK Science and Innovation Network summary: France - GOV.UK](#)) which took place on 29 February 2024 in London, the UK government and the French government each committed funding to support the establishment and development of research collaborations on a bilateral basis between the UK and France.

In line with this objective, Universities UK International (UUKi, an operating unit of Universities UK) is launching the UK-France Science, Innovation, and Technology researcher mobility scheme. This programme of competitive grants is available exclusively to UUK member institutions to use in the context of research and innovation partnerships with France. We welcome creative applications from institutions for activities that support the development of new or existing partnerships between UK Higher Education institutions and France. The partnership will need to support delivery of the institutions' strategic objectives as they relate to research, innovation, skills development and international partnership. The projects supported through this scheme should be closely aligned with Horizon Europe and/or other international collaborative funding programmes. Priority will be given to those with a particular focus on energy transition and hydrogen, Space and Earth observation, artificial intelligence including ethics and research security, as defined by the two countries during the UK-France bilateral research dialogue.

The funding for this mobility scheme has been provided by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) via the International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF; [International Science Partnerships Fund \(ISPF\) - GOV.UK](#)).

2. Objectives and aims of the scheme

The scheme will support the development of UK innovation capabilities and expertise via international mobility of UK based researchers and research related staff by funding them to travel and collaborate with French partners, for mobilities of 1-8 months. This scheme will provide funding for researchers and research-related staff from UK higher education institutions to spend a period of mobility at an existing or new partner organisation in France. Successful institutions will be expected to demonstrate how the targeted activities will support or enable researchers to develop collaborative activity between the UK and France that support both institutional and UK-wide research and innovation priorities, with a goal of working towards a submission of a Horizon Europe application, or other international collaborative funding programmes, building on their grant idea when a relevant call opens. Mobilities will need to be completed by the end of January 2026.

In line with UUK's charitable objectives, the primary beneficiaries of the funding programme must be UK higher education institutions (HEI).

The outcomes that the programme will deliver are:

- UK universities will have resources to build long-term strategic partnerships that support both institutional and UK-wide research and innovation priorities.

- UK innovation capabilities and expertise will be developed by supporting UK based researchers and research related staff to travel and learn from expertise from France.
- Shared resources and capabilities that will better position UK universities to participate in Horizon Europe and other international collaborative funding programmes, and particularly within the areas of:
 - energy transition and hydrogen
 - Space and Earth observation;
 - artificial intelligence, including ethics;
 - research security.
- Partnerships between the UK and French research ecosystems that advance existing, or develop new, research and innovation collaborations, with a particular focus on Horizon Europe or other international collaborative funding programmes.
- Applicants who have never received EU Framework Programme funding will be supported to develop Horizon Europe applications, including Early Career Researchers.

3. Eligibility

The **UK-France Science, Innovation and Technology researcher mobility scheme** is open to all UK HEIs that are eligible to receive grant funding from one of the UK higher education funding bodies (such as UK Research and Innovation) and are a member of Universities UK ([Our members](#)). It is expected that the Lead applicant from the UK HEI will lead the relationship with the existing or new partner in France.

Completed application forms must be submitted **online** by a designated Lead applicant from a UK HEI and signed off by an appropriate senior representative of the institution. A senior representative might constitute a head of department, school or faculty. Please note that the lead applicant must obtain the appropriate level of institutional sign off (this will depend on the UK HEI's internal approval processes) before submitting the application.

To be eligible to apply the Lead applicant must:

- hold a PhD or equivalent qualification
- be a permanent employee or treated as one throughout the proposed research project
- devote a set amount of their working hours to delivering this project

If your French counterpart has received funding via the [Sophie Germain Funding Scheme](#) by the French Embassy in London, you will need to indicate this as part of your application.

Please note that the Lead applicant need not necessarily be planning on undertaking a mobility themselves but will have overall responsibility for the application and any subsequent awards.

The individual mobilities are open to:

- **researchers** at all career stages (PhD, post-doc, lecturer, etc)
- **research-related staff** (including technicians, research funding/development managers, business/innovation managers and related roles) provided that it can be sufficiently demonstrated that their participation will upskill them for beneficial use towards Horizon Europe funding submissions or other international collaborative funding programmes.

To be eligible to undertake periods of mobility, researchers and research-related staff must:

- be employed or be undertaking a research degree (PhD, MRes or equivalent) at the Lead UK HEI for the duration of the mobility
- be able to undertake mobility within the timeframe 1 April 2025 – 31 January 2026.

Those funded under this mobility are required to be physically located in France for the duration of the mobility in order to carry out this project. See FAQs on our webpage for further information ([UK-France Science, Innovation, and Technology Researcher Mobility Scheme](#)).

4. Available funding

The total amount of funding available for the **UK-France Technology and Innovation researcher mobility scheme** is **£300,000**. UUKi expects to make around 10-15 awards altogether, but this is highly dependent on the number and duration of individual mobilities. Institutions can apply for a maximum of 8 months of mobility, across up to a maximum of 3 researchers and/or research-related staff. One of the candidates must be undertaking mobility of at least 3 months. There is no limit on the number of applications an institution can submit. UUKi will however be looking to award a diverse range of institution types/models as part of this scheme so institutions are expected to prioritise applications that are most closely aligned to the call's objectives.

5. Eligible costs and profile of spend

The **UK-France Science, Innovation and Technology researcher mobility scheme** funding is awarded to UK HEIs based on the below categories of costs and the corresponding flat rates awarded on a per-researcher/research related staff, per-monthly basis (unless otherwise indicated).

Direct costs:

- Travel – flight or train journey and local travel UK & France: (1st month only – one off payment) **£500**
- Visa and associated costs: (one off payment) £200; (short stay <90 days)/ £250 (long stay >90 days).
- Subsistence – accommodation and local travel: **£2,000**

- Subsistence - living costs: **£1,500**
- Dependants allowance: (if applicable, please specify in budget spreadsheet; one off payment) **£500**
- Disability allowance **£1,000** (if applicable, disability must have been disclosed to employer, please specify in budget spreadsheet; one off payment)
- Salary Costs/Teaching Replacement (if applicable and for exchange of more than three months mobility, one off payment) **£5,000**

Indirect cost (contribution):

- Set at **10% of Direct costs**

UK HEIs will invoice UUKi for the total value of the eligible costs incurred in the given reporting period. As the official project start date is 1 April 2025 the initial reporting period closes 30 September 2025 and the second and final reporting period on 28 February 2026 (with activity ending no later than 31 January 2026).

6. Terms of application

- This guidelines document is not an agreement and is neither an offer nor invitation of offer by UUKi to the prospective applicants or any other person.
- The purpose of these guidelines is to provide interested parties with information to assist in the formulation of their application.
- Applications that are not duly authorised and /or not received by the specified deadline will not be accepted.
- UUKi will notify both the Lead applicant and administrative contact where the UK HEI has been provisionally selected for funding (subject to agreeing a contract between UUKi and the UK HEI).
- UUKi reserves the right to publish the names of selected UK HEIs. By making an application to the scheme you are giving your consent for your details to be published in this way, provided your application is successful.
- Offer of award (including Terms and Conditions) are subject to UK local law and practices and are subject to change by UUKi.
- UUKi may in its absolute discretion, but without being under any obligation to do so, update, amend, or supplement the information, assessment or assumptions contained in these guidelines.

7. Data Protection

- UUKi will use information provided in the application solely for the purpose of processing the application, making any consequential award, for the payment, monitoring and review of the Award.

- UUKi shall share any necessary data on the application with the UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), or nominated DSIT representative, for reporting purposes.

8. How to apply

- The deadline for applications is **Sunday 12 January 2025 at 5pm (GMT)**

All applications must be submitted via the dedicated call webpage using the designated online application form. This is available at: <https://forms.office.com/e/BnZnB6SMX7>

Frequently Asked Questions have been compiled and added to the call webpage. Answers to any subsequent questions will be added to the FAQs page.

9. Selection criteria

Please refer to detailed criteria for applications in the call document 'Selection Criteria'. As stated in the 'Selection Criteria' document applications will be scored out of 20 in total with each of the following criteria being scored out of 5 and equally weighted:

- Partnership fit
- Project fit
- Sustainability and impact
- Operational capacity and cost effectiveness.

Each application will be evaluated and scored remotely by three independent reviewers. The applications will be listed according to their scores and reviewed by the Selection Committee who will make the final decision on funding allocations. The Selection Committee will comprise Pro-Vice Chancellors at UK HEIs or senior members of staff with relevant experience from sector organisations. In the event of a split panel, the Selection Committee Chair will have the deciding vote.

The decision of the Selection Committee is final and confidential. No appeals will be considered. UUKi is unable to enter into any communication on the Selection Committee's decisions.

10. Timeline

Call opens	Thursday 14 November 2024
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Call closes	Sunday 12th January 2025 (5pm GMT)
Review and selection process	Completed by early February 2025
Institutions notified of outcome	By end February 2025
Project start date	1 April 2025
Project activity end date	No later than 30 January 2026
Final report due	28 February 2026
Mobility must take place within the project dates stated. Extensions will not be permitted	1 April 2025– 30 January 2026

11. Offer of award (including Terms and Conditions)

Full conditions of the award can be found in the Offer of award letter (including Terms and Conditions) which can be made available upon request by emailing uk-france-grants@international.ac.uk.

12. Key call documents

The following key call documents can be found on the call webpage:

- Application form
- Call guidelines
- Selection criteria
- Budget spreadsheet
- Reporting templates - available on the webpage from end November
- FAQs – on the call webpage: [UK-France Science, Innovation, and Technology Researcher Mobility Scheme](#)

As part of the application form Lead applicants will be asked to confirm that they have read, understood and agree with the call guidelines, selection criteria and offer of award letter.

13. About Universities UK International (UUKi)

[Universities UK International \(UUKi\)](#) is the international arm of Universities UK, representing UK universities and acting in their collective interests globally. We actively promote universities abroad, provide trusted information for and about them, and create new opportunities for the sector.

14. Contact

If you have any questions, please contact the UUKi Strategic Partnerships Team:

Universities UK International

Woburn House

20 Tavistock Square

London WC1H 9HQ

Email: uk-france-grants@international.ac.uk

15. Applicant Eligibility checklist

The application form is completed in full and complies with instructions given	
The budget spreadsheet has been completed and sent to the email address listed above upon submission of the online application form	
All the necessary institutional approvals to submit the application on behalf of applying UK HEI and partner organisation have been obtained	
The institution applying is a UK HEI that receives grant funding from one of the UK higher education funding bodies	
Lead applicants submitting this application are employed by the Lead UK HEI and are resident in the UK at the point of application	
The partner organisation is an existing or new partner of the applying UK HEI and is aware of this potential mobility and its aims	
The proposed duration of each individual researcher mobility is no less than one month in total and must be completed by the 31 January 2026. The minimum mobility requirement of 3 months for one applicant as part of a proposal has been met.	