Universities UK International

Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade

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

Guidelines

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday 18 January 2027

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1. Background and overview of the scheme

This programme is funded through the UK Government's International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF; International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF) - GOV.UK). ISPF is the UK Government's flagship fund for international science, technology, research and innovation. By bringing together expertise from the UK and around the world, the Fund supports collaboration on shared priorities, strengthens research and innovation capability, and develops the ideas, technologies and solutions needed for a more prosperous, secure and sustainable future. Universities UK International (UUKi), an operating unit of Universities UK (UUK), is launching a second call of the **UK-France Science, Innovation, and Technology researcher mobility 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. This dialogue led to the first calls of the UK-France Science, Innovation and Technology pump priming scheme and researcher mobility scheme. Following the success of these schemes, UUKi launched a second call of the pump priming scheme in September 2025.

The second UK-France bilateral research dialogue took place on 28 May 2026 in Paris. The dialogue saw a renewed commitment to UK-France research partnerships with both countries announcing additional funding. Funding has been provided through the UK Government's International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF) for a UK-France 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 recently established dormant 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 2027 calls and/or other international collaborative funding programmes. Projects must focus on Health and/or Artificial Intelligence, as defined by the two countries during the UK-France bilateral research dialogue.

1. Objectives and aims of the scheme

This scheme will provide funding for researchers and research-related staff from UK higher education institutions to spend a period of mobility (1-8 months) at an existing or new partner organisation in France. Funding is also available for activities which would support UK-France partnerships to submit applications to international opportunities.

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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 December 2027.

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 2027 calls and other international collaborative funding programmes, within the areas of:
    - Health
    - Artificial Intelligence
- Partnerships between the UK and French research ecosystems that advance existing, research and innovation collaborations, with a particular focus on Horizon Europe or other international collaborative funding programmes.
- Applicants, including Early Career Researchers will gain experience in developing Horizon Europe or other relevant international funding applications.

2. 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 partner in France.

Completed application forms must be submitted **online on our grant management platform** by a designated Lead Applicant from a UK HEI. Before submitting the application, the Lead Applicant must have identified an appropriate senior representative of the institution to authorise their application in accordance with their institution's internal approval processes. A senior representative might constitute a head of department, school or faculty. They must be named in the application. Following submission, this individual will be notified and asked to confirm whether the

application has received the necessary institutional approval. They must approve the application before the application deadline.

To be eligible to apply the Lead applicant must:

- be a researcher at an institution which is a UUK member throughout the funded period
- hold a PhD or equivalent qualification
- be a permanent employee or treated as one throughout the proposed research project
- be employed at an institution which receives grant funding from one of the UK higher education funding bodies, such as UKRI
- devote a set amount of their working hours to delivering this project
- take part in the mobility to the French partner institution
- confirm that the proposal is related to an existing, recently established or dormant partnerships with a French institution or organisation
- Lead applicants submitting this application are employed by the Lead UK HEI and are resident in the UK at the point of application
- confirm that the proposal has been discussed with their counterparts
- have identified a Horizon Europe cluster or call they would like to apply to
- confirm that the proposed project/partnership has not previously received funding under the UK-France researcher mobility scheme- call one: UK-France Science, Innovation, and Technology Researcher Mobility Scheme.

If your French counterpart has received funding via the Sophie Germain Funding Scheme by the French Embassy in London, please make this known in your application.

The individual mobilities are open to:

- researchers at all career stages (PhD, post-doc, lecturer, etc)
- research-related staff (including technicians, research funding/development mangers, 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 2027 – 31 December 2027

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 researcher mobility scheme — call two).

3. Available funding

The total amount of funding available for the UK-France Technology and Innovation researcher mobility scheme- call two 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 and total amounts across awards made. 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.

4. Eligible costs and profile of spend

The UK-France Science, Innovation and Technology researcher mobility scheme- call two funding is awarded to UK HEIs based on the below categories of costs- Mobility costs (direct and indirect), and Support costs.

Your total application amount must not exceed £30,000.

Mobility costs:

Mobility costs should be applied for using the below mobility rates guidance table below. Travel and subsistence costs can be applied for up to the limits outlined, and dependant's allowance, disability allowance and replacement teaching costs can be applied for as the flat fees outlined.

Payment of travel and subsistence costs will be made based on actual costs. Payment of dependant's allowance, disability allowance and replacement teaching costs will be given as flat fee payments.

This table indicates how the mobility costs should be treated in the application form, and how they will be paid for successful institutions:

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DIRECT COSTS			
TRAVEL COSTS			
Cost type	**For application - to apply up to these amounts**	**Payment type/conditions**	**For payment**
Travel	£500	One off payment	Actual costs should be claimed (up to max. £500)
Visa costs	£100/ £350	One off payment Initial travel and visa costs only applicable in month 1; £100 for short stay (<90 days); £350 for long stay (>90 days)	Actual costs should be claimed (up to £100 / £350)
SUBSISTENCE COSTS			
Cost type	**For application - to apply up to these amounts per month of mobility**	**Payment type/conditions**	**For payment**
Accommodation and local travel	£2,000	Per researcher, per month	Actual costs should be claimed (up to totals indicated)
Living costs	£1,500	Per researcher, per month	Actual costs should be claimed (up to totals indicated)
OTHER COSTS			
Cost type	**For application**	**Conditions**	**For payment**
Replacement teaching cost	£5,000	One off payment Only applicable to mobilities of >3 months and if replacement teaching is required	Flat fee should be claimed.
Dependant allowance	£500	One off payment Only if applicable. Please refer to FAQs for guidance	Flat fee should be claimed.

Disability allowance	£1,000	One off payment Only if applicable. Please refer to FAQs for guidance	Flat fee should be claimed.
INDIRECT COSTS			
Cost type	**For application**	**Conditions**	**For payment**
Indirect cost (contribution)	set at 10% of direct costs	N/A	10% of direct costs should be claimed.

Additional support costs:

- Additional funding up to £5,000 can be awarded for activities supplementary to mobilities which will support grantees to progress towards a Horizon Europe application before December 2027 or international funding application. These could include:
  - costs for concept or proof of market work and proposal development
  - costs of meetings for the organisations involved in the preparation of the Horizon Europe or other international proposal
  - due diligence work on partners
  - contributions towards support services such as proposal writing

Support costs should be applied for based on estimated costs, and payment will be made based on actual costs, up to the totals included in application budgets.

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 2027 the initial reporting period closes 13 August 2027. The second and final reporting period closes on 29 January 2028 (with activity ending no later than 31 December 2027).

5. 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 to Terms and Conditions).
- 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.
- Offers of awards (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.
- Due to the volume of applications expected, UUKi will not provide feedback on individual applications.

6. 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. As part of the assessment process, application information may be shared with external reviewers and members of the Selection Committee for the purposes of peer review and selection.
- UUKi shall share any necessary data on the application with the UK Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade (BIST) for reporting purposes.

7. Research Security and Export Controls

Applicants are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable legislation, regulatory requirements and institutional policies relevant to the proposed activity. This includes engagement with relevant processes at your university to ensure due diligence is undertaken and risk mitigations have been put in place.

Applicants should consider whether their project involves:

- Transfers of export-controlled data, technology, know-how or biological resources to partners outside of the UK
- Research in the 17 sensitive areas of the economy under the National Security and Investment Act
- Recruiting or moving researchers or postgraduate research students into a role in a technology-related field requiring an Academic Technology Approval Scheme certificate
- Arrangements under which you may be at direction of a foreign power, as defined by the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme
- Other sensitive or dual-use research

Applicants are encouraged to review:

- UK strategic export controls - GOV.UK
- National Security and Investment Act guidance
- Academic Technology Approval Scheme guidance
- Foreign Influence Registration Scheme guidance
- NPSA Trusted Research campaign
- UUK guidance on managing risks in international research and innovation

For further information, applicants should seek guidance from your university research office. As part of the application process, applicants will also be required to confirm that they have followed their institution's relevant research security policies, procedures and approval processes prior to submission.

8. How to apply

The deadline for applications is Monday 18 January 2027 at 5pm (GMT)

All applications must be submitted via our grant management platform, Good Grants. To get set up on Good Grants, please follow the link here.

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:

- Strategic partnership fit
- Project fit
- Deliverability
- Alignment with Horizon Europe priorities or other international funding proposals

All applications will be subject to an eligibility check undertaken by appropriate UUKi staff before being put forward for assessment by a pool of peer reviewers. Applications that are not completed correctly and authorised by the deadline will not be considered. All reviewed proposals submitted in response to this call will be assessed by an independent Selection Committee. 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	16 November 2026
Call closes	18 January 2027
Review and selection process	February 2027
Institutions notified of outcome	February- March 2027
Project start date	1 April 2027
Interim report due	13 August 2027
Project activity end date	31 December 2027
Final report due	29 January 2028
Follow up reports	• 6 months post project closure, no later than 30 June 2028 • 12 months post project closure, no later than 26 January 2029

11. Key call documents

The following key call documents can be found on the call webpage, including links to set up your account on our grant management platform to access the application form: UK-France researcher mobility scheme — call two.

- Call guidelines
- Selection criteria
- Budget spreadsheet
- FAQs

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.

12. 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.

13. 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

14. Applicant Eligibility checklist

Good Grants account is set up for PI with institutional sign-off contact	
The application form is completed in full and complies with instructions given	
The budget spreadsheet has been uploaded as part of the submission of the online application form and complies with instructions given	
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 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 December 2027. The minimum mobility requirement of 3 months for one applicant as part of a proposal has been met.	

The institution has identified a Horizon Europe call or other international funding opportunity they would like to apply to	
The institution applying has confirmed the proposed project/partnership has not received any funding via UK-France researcher mobility scheme	