Call for Proposals

Seed Fund

“Transition to a fossil-free society”

*Winter 2023*

# Background and purpose

Similar to governments, industry and the financial world, educational institutions are increasingly being questioned about their role in the transition to climate neutrality, often in the context of cooperation with the fossil fuel industry. UM is convinced of the urgent state our climate is in and recognises the need to act decisively to limit further damage. At the same time, we also see the complexity of the situation and the dilemmas we face as a society: acutely stopping the use of fossil fuels, for example, would collapse our entire food and healthcare systems, among other things. Phasing out is a process of years, even decades.

UM believes that the transition of these systems hinges on interdisciplinary knowledge development and transdisciplinary cooperation. That is why we want to invite UM researchers to submit applications for seed fund projects to establish interdisciplinary and cross-faculty sustainability research collaboration. The aim of the seed fund is to promote strategic research focusing on the transition to a fossil-free society. The seed fund is aimed to promote and fund the first collaborative research, networking and preparation of research funding.

In the future, UM Sustainability Research Spearheads will be a research stronghold and contribute with expertise, a wider span of research methods and innovative approaches to the academic community, companies, policy-makers and society. UM Sustainability Research Spearheads will be

* challenge driven addressing the transition to a fossil-free society
* bridge disciplinary boundaries and involve researchers from at least two UM faculties
* create ties with external stakeholders and show participation of external stakeholders in design and further development of the spearhead (co-creation)
* explore possibilities to contribute to Minors, MSc, Postgraduate and PhD programmes
* are visible and relevant to the needs of research, education, business development, policymaking and/or the wider society.

**Match-making event ‘Transition to Fossil-Free’**

In order to foster collaboration between researchers of different faculties, SUM2030 will organize a so-called match-making event where researchers will have the opportunity to discuss and interact with each other in order to promote the development of strategic research focusing on the transition to a fossil-free society.

This match-making event will take place on **Thursday, November 23rd**, from **14.30 – 17.30**.

Location to be determined.

Registration is mandatory. Please send an email to *sustainability@maastrichtuniversity.nl*.

**Writing your proposal**

Selected proposals in this call will be awarded a seed fund that facilitates:

* establishing strategic collaborations between sustainability researchers within UM
* preparing for external (international) collaboration and research grants.

The seed fund should preferably support new research collaborations or strategically and significantly expand existing research collaborations.

# Who can apply?

The call is open for all researchers with a position at UM.

# What can be applied?

The maximum requested amount of funding per proposal is €50,000. The own contribution per proposal is at least €10,000 (cash or in-kind, to be specified in the proposal).

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**Evaluation criteria**

*Eligibility*

* The proposal is submitted by researchers from at least two UM faculties
* The proposal includes a commitment and a specification for the own contribution to the budget

*Research quality and originality*

The proposal

* demonstrates the added value of the research collaboration, the contributions of different scientific fields and the contribution to a fossil-free society;
* presents a clear strategy to develop a UM Sustainability Research Spearhead;
* provides a concrete plan for identifying (further) external stakeholders such as companies and (local) governments

*Team*

The applicants

* have a track record in the proposed research field(s)
* are able to attract and engage top researchers and students from UM
* are able to attract and engage different partners across sectors (e.g. business, government)

*Impact and future potential*

The proposal

* is supported by one or more external stakeholders and/or Brightlands campuses confirmed and specified in a Letter of Support
* clarifies how the researchers will engage with other researchers and/or stakeholders to grow from a seed fund project to a larger research project
* provides a concrete plan for further research support from external funds

**Submission of applications**

Proposals can be submitted using the application form in the appendix to *sustainability@maastrichtuniversity.nl* and should not exceed a maximum of five pages. The submission deadline is December 20th, 2023, at 13:00 hours CET.

**Evaluation procedure**

All proposals will be evaluated by the SUM2030 management team. The Board of Deans will take the decision on the funding of applications on January 24th, 2024.

**More information**

For additional information, please contact the Sustainable UM 2030 team via *sustainability@maastrichtuniversity.nl*.

Appendix - **Application form Call “Seed Fund for Transition to a fossil-free society” (max. 5 pages after completion)**

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| **Proposal details** |
| Main Applicant: |  |
| Title(s), initial(s), name: |  |
| Phone: |  |
| E-mail: |  |
| Department: |  |
| Co-applicants (at least 1): |  |
|  | Name | Department | School/Institute |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| 1.
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|  Etc. |  |  |  |
| Title of the proposal: |  |
| Project duration (Months): |  |

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| --- |
| Sustainability Research Collaboration and Strategy |
| Please include the following elements: added value of the research collaboration, the contributions of the different scientific fields, and the link with the transition to a fossil-free society, strategy to develop a UM sustainability research spearhead, plan for identifying (further) external stakeholders such as companies and (local) governments |
|  |
| **Project team**  |
| Please describe the members of the research team, the complementary expertise, the track record of each applicant |
|  |
| **Impact and Future Potential** |
| Please describe how this seed grant is supported by external stakeholders, how researchers will engage with other researchers and/or stakeholders to grow from a seed fund project to a larger research project, the plan for further research support from external funds |
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| **Budget** |
| Total project costs: | € |
| Specification of the project costs: |  |
| Requested amount of funding (max. requested budget is € 50,000): | € |
| Amount and specification of co-funding (cash or in-kind) by applicants | € |