UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA

Uni-Impresa 2024

Call for applications for financing of joint research projects with companies and bodies aimed at innovation and the economic and social development of the territory

With this call for applications, the University of Padua (hereinafter "the University") intends to promote the development of joint research projects with external parties to encourage cooperation aimed at mutual expansion in terms of innovation and the economic and social development of the territory.
The University will co-finance the university structures (Departments and Centres) that will present joint projects to carry out the planned research activities.
Private and public partners (hereinafter "the partners") will help finance the project by making a contribution that will, as a minimum, match that financed by the University.

It is specified that the activities envisaged by this Call, in view of their specific object, “do not fall within the scope of the rules on State aid”, pursuant to paragraph 31 of the Communication from the Commission 2016/C 262/01 of July 16, 2016, published in the Official Journal of the European Union on July 19, 2016, on the interpretation of Article 107 of the TFEU. Furthermore, in consideration of the intellectual property rights rules contemplated in Article 11 of this Call for proposals, the funding allocated by the University in execution of the Call must not be considered as indirect State aid granted to the participating companies, pursuant to paragraph 29 of the Communication from the Commission 2022/C 4141/01 of October 19, 2022.

Article 1 - Type of projects

Uni-Impresa projects aim to foster public-private partnerships (between universities and companies or private bodies) and public-public partnerships (between Universities and public bodies). Projects should be aimed at the joint implementation of research activities applied to the partner's economic sector of reference, encouraging multidisciplinary approaches.
There are no limitations on the scientific area or the economic sector. The projects must have an applied nature with a high socio-economic impact. Research activities may be carried out at university departments, at partner sites and at the testing grounds deemed most suitable for conducting research.

Article 2 – Eligible applicants and partnerships

Projects shall be submitted by partnerships consisting of:

- 1 or more University departments, up to a maximum of 3, and
- 1 or more companies and/or public or private bodies up to a maximum of 3 (hereinafter “the partner”)

The project leader shall be a University department and shall be responsible for the administrative, financial and accounting management of the project in the event of admission to financing.
The partnership must be established by a declaration of participation, containing the declaration of the partners’ interest, their willingness to cooperate in carrying out the project and to support the financial commitment as well as to be bound by confidentiality regarding the data shared during the project as specified in Article 6.1 below. Where financing is granted, an agreement will be signed between the University and the partners, as specified in Article 8 below

Scientific Coordinator and incompatibilities

The scientific Coordinator of the project must be a tenured professor of the University (full professor, associate professor, researcher) belonging to the project leader structure.

Lecturers and researchers who are scientific Coordinators of previously funded Uni-Impresa projects may submit a project for this Call for applications with the role of scientific Coordinator, provided that all the following conditions are met:

- the previous project is closed;
- the previous project obtained in the final evaluation a minimum score of:
  - 12/20 for projects that by their nature do not produce patentable or otherwise eligible for protection)
  - 15/25 for projects that could produce patentable or otherwise protectable results.

Lecturers and researchers who, though not as scientific Coordinators, are part of teams in previously funded UniImpresa projects that are not yet closed, may submit projects as scientific Coordinator for this Call for applications.

Article 3 – Financial resources and co-financing

The University will finance the creation of the projects submitted and selected within the framework of the Call for applications, by allocating € 465,000 divided into two lines of financing:

- LINE 1: Up to a maximum of € 330,000 in favour of research projects carried out jointly by the University and a maximum of three partners.
  Of these, at least one must be a private company or an economic public body[1].
- LINE 2: Up to a maximum of € 135,000 in favour of research projects carried out jointly by the University and by a maximum of three non-economic public bodies[1] or private not-for-profit bodies.

The University will provide a grant of up to € 50,000 per individual project. The partner must finance the creation of the project with a contribution at least equal to that made by the University.

Where there is more than one partner, their total co-financing must be higher than that of the University, according to the following formula:

Partner Contribution = University Contribution + [50% University Contribution x (no. partner-1)]

By way of example:

University contribution	**Cumulative contrubution from partners**	
€ 50,000	€ 50,000	1 partner
	€ 75,000	2 partners
	€ 100,000	3 partners

The University will make its contribution to the University departments participating in the project following notice of the project's launch. The department will return any portion not needed or unspent at the end of the project.

[1] [1] Economic public bodies are those public bodies whose exclusive or main purpose is the exercise of a commercial undertaking

For each financed project, the University will enter into an agreement with the partners to regulate the various aspects of the cooperation. The agreement shall state that the partners must transfer their contribution to the University department.

Article 4 - Duration of projects and expenditure eligibility period

Projects will last 24 months from the date the activities start, which must be communicated to the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office by the scientific Coordinator within a maximum of three days from the start of the project activities.

Any extension to complete the activity may only be granted by decision of a Committee, chaired by the Pro-Rector for technology transfer and business relations, at the written and justified request of the project scientific Coordinator. Expenditure will be eligible from the date the activities start until the date of submitting the final report (45 days from the end of the project).

Article 5 – Eligible expenses

Eligible costs are exclusively those costs necessary for the creation of the project and those incurred during the project's lifetime.

1. Costs of non-permanent personnel hired for the project in accordance with the law and the University's recruitment regulations. If the non-permanent personnel is not entirely dedicated to the project, the percentage of cooperation with the project must be indicated, along with the cost.
2. Costs for purchasing consumables specifically related to the project (e.g. reagents, slides, etc.). Stationary and general use expenses are excluded.
3. The total cost incurred to purchase durable goods specifically related to the project. Furniture, office equipment and books are excluded. The University remains the owner of the goods even after the conclusion of the project.
4. Costs for renting scientific and IT equipment specifically necessary to carry out the project.
5. Costs for technical-scientific advice and services. Expenses for supporting the administrative management of projects are excluded. Expenses related to patenting/protecting the project's results are eligible. In this case, the procedure provided for in the University's Patent Regulations in force must be followed.
6. Distribution and publication costs. The project and its results must be distributed and published in compliance with the confidentiality agreements entered into between the partners.
7. Missions strictly necessary for the creation of the permanent and non-permanent university personnel project in accordance with the Mission Regulations of the University of Padua and mobility expenses of the partner's personnel involved in the project.

Any changes to the project's budget must be duly justified when reporting the project.

Article 6 – Procedure to submit project proposals

The project submission application must only be sent by using the appropriate procedure made available in PICA: https://pica.cineca.it/unipd/uni-impresa-2024 not later than 1:00 PM (Italian, time) on 7 March 2025.

In addition to a photocopy of the applicant's valid identity document (Project Coordinator), the documents referred to in Article 6.1 must be attached to the project submission application in pdf/A format.

The project submission application is to be considered for all legal purposes as a substitute declaration pursuant to Articles 46 and 47 of DPR (Presidential Decree) 445/2000 and subsequent amendments.

Once completed, the application must be printed, signed and uploaded to the platform following the indications described in the instructions available on the PICA platform.

The application is submitted to the University automatically with the definitive closure of the online procedure. Therefore, no paper material shall be sent or delivered to the offices. The applicant is responsible for checking the correct conclusion of the electronic procedure.

We recommend completing the electronic procedure well in advance of the deadline of this call for applications. Complaints over any malfunction of the computer system due to overloads encountered near the deadline will not be accepted.

Once the application has been submitted, it will no longer be possible to modify it. However, cancelling and submitting a new application in the event of errors or missing information, is permitted within the deadline.

6.1 Mandatory Annexes

The following must be attached to the project submission application:

1) a declaration by the director of the lead university department approving the submission of the project proposal and committing the department to the role of project leader and assuming the subsequent responsibilities and obligations;
2) a declaration of participation in the project signed by the director of any other departments of the University of Padua that take part in the project;
3) a declaration of partnership membership signed by the legal representative of each partner. If the signatory is a delegate of the legal representative, a copy of the power of attorney must be attached.

The declarations mentioned in the previous points must be drafted according to the models prepared by the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office.

6.2 Mandatory Information

Each proposal must state:

1. the lecturers/researchers of the University of Padua, including those without tenure, who will participate in the activities;
2. a contact person from the department of the University of Padua which is the project leader, who will act as a reference for administrative issues and notices;
3. a contact person for the company or other partner entity;
4. company personnel or other partner entities involved in the project;
5. indications of the cultural and scientific background and research interests that the expert should possess for a relevant evaluation of the project proposal;
6. the ERC codes and the subject areas the project falls within, combined with the indications under point 5, will enable the selection of experts from the MUR database Reprise;
7. WPs describing the planned activities and the personnel involved in each phase;
8. the project's budget. The total cost of the project must be equal to the sum of the co-financing contributions made by the University and the partners.

Article 7 - Selection procedure

The project proposals received will be subject to the following evaluation steps:

1. administrative review of eligibility and completeness of documents;
2. technical-scientific quality assessment

7.1 Administrative review of eligibility and completeness of documents

The Third Mission and Research Valorization Office will carry out an administrative review by checking, in particular:

a) the presence of all the requirements set out in Article 2;
b) the completeness of the documentation required by Article 6.1. If the documentation is incomplete, the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office will request the documentation to be supplemented. This must be provided strictly within 15 days of the request, under penalty of inadmissibility to the project proposal;
c) the presence in the project proposal of the information referred to in Article 6.2. The review purely regards the completeness of the information, it will not go into the merits of its correctness and suitability. Proposals considered eligible will be subject to a technical-scientific quality assessment.

7.2 Technical-scientific quality assessment

Only those proposals that meet all administrative criteria will be subject to a technical-scientific quality assessment. Each project proposal will be evaluated by three external experts, selected from the "Reprise" database based on the information under Article 6.2.5, the ERC and the subject areas indicated in the project proposal.

The evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

1. Innovativeness of the proposed research: advancement of knowledge, skills and/or technologies compared to the state of art - Max 40 points
2. Socio-economic impact of the proposed research, prospects for distribution and transfer of expected results in the specific production sector or field of application of interest. Methodologies of cooperation with industrial/territorial partners – Max 40 points;
3. Quality of project management, appropriateness of costs and expected objectives and adequacy of creation times compared to the overall duration of the project – Max 20 points.

The Third Mission and Research Valorization Office will draw up a provisional ranking list for each line of financing pursuant to Article 3 based on the average scores assigned by the experts. Projects receiving a score of at least 70/100 will be admitted to the ranking list.

The provisional rankings will be submitted to a Committee, which will draw up a final ranking list for each line of financing, taking into account expert assessments and any tied scoring. For each line, the Committee will assign financing to the projects in the ranking list until the budget is reached. In the event that the projects in the ranking list for one line of financing do not reach the budget of that line, the Committee may decide to move the remaining budget to the other line of financing, if this allows a higher number of projects to be financed.

The projects will be financed following the final ranking list until the budget made available by the University is reached.

Article 8 - Approval of projects

The final ranking lists with the evaluation results, approved by a Rector's Decree, will be published on the University notice board and on the intranet of the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office.

Publication constitutes legal notice to the beneficiaries.

The scientific Coordinators of the projects eligible for funding will receive notice via e-mail regarding the project start-up procedures. Approved projects must be started within 60 days of the date of publishing the Decree. Cooperation among the partners, which will be established following the financing of the project, must be governed by a specific agreement, the model of which will be prepared by the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office based on the laws in force, the University regulations and the indications referred to in Article 11 of this call for applications “Ownership and use of research results”.

Article 9 - Intermediate check

The financed projects will be subject to a progress check one year after the actual start of activities, communicated to the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office pursuant to Article 4.

The check will be both of a technical-scientific and administrative nature. The relevant documentation must be submitted within 45 days of the end of the first year of activity.

The administrative check will be carried out by the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office.

The technical-scientific check will be carried out by two external experts skilled in the field.

Delays and deviations of project activities from the approved plan must be duly justified and a corrective plan and/or a remodulation of expenses must be provided.

Article 10 - Final check

The financed projects will be subject to a final check at the end of the activity.

The check will be both administrative and technical-scientific. The relevant documentation must be submitted within 45 days from the end date of the project.

The final technical-scientific report will describe the project’s results and demonstrate the achievement of the objectives, with particular attention to:

a. creating industrial or application products (e.g. working prototypes, applications, business plans, innovative services, etc.);
b. inventions that are patentable or otherwise eligible for protection;
c. impact on society in terms of socio-economic benefits for the territory; d. scientific production.

A copy of the deliverables produced must be attached to the report.

The technical-scientific check will be carried out by two external experts skilled in the field.

The administrative audit will consist of checking the expenditure incurred. Costs will be recognised up to the amount approved in the proposal phase. Any surpluses will not be refunded.
In the case of expenses below the budget, the unused sums will be returned to the co-funders (University and partners) in proportion to their contributions.
The administrative check will be carried out by the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office.
Delays and deviations on both project activities and expenditure with respect to the approved plan must be duly justified and must not have adversely affected the achievement of the objectives. Partial or failed achievement of the objectives will result in reduced financing.

Article 11 - Ownership and using the research results

In the materials disclosing the financed projects it is mandatory to use the name and/or distinctive logos of the University, its participating department, the partners and the Uni-Impresa initiative according to the University's visual identity guidelines and partner's rules. In particular, the following must be stated:

“Project financed as part of the Uni-Impresa 2024 programme promoted by the University of Padua”.

The industrial property rights to the research results (patentable inventions, new models, technical and commercial know-how as per the Industrial Property Code, Legislative Decree 10 February 2005 n. 30 and subsequent amendments and supplements), as well as the related access rights shall be jointly owned by the University and the partners, in a way that adequately reflects their respective interests, participation in the work, and the inventive contribution provided by their relevant personnel to the project. These rights will be governed by a specific agreement. This shall be without prejudice to the legal rights of the authors and inventors.

The ownership of the results that may constitute intellectual property rights, including rights on software is subject to the provisions of Legge (Law) No. 633/1941 as amended and supplemented on “Protection of copyright and other rights related to the exercise thereof”. Commercial uses will be the subject of a specific agreement.
Each participating entity may only publish the results deriving from the project activity with the written permission of the other partners, taking due account of the protection and exploitation of intellectual property and the possible industrial development of these results.
The research products must be filed in the Padua Research Archive at the following address: https://www.research.unipd.it/

Article 12 - Person in charge of the procedure

The person in charge of the procedure is Andrea Berti, manager of the Research and Business Relations Area.

Article 13 - Protection of privacy

The personal data acquired through registration to the PICA platform, for the submission of the application, are processed by Cineca (Data Controller) in accordance with the Information Notice pursuant to Articles 13 and 14 of the EU Regulation No. 2016/679, available at https://pica.cineca.it/informativa-privacy/.
The personal data contained in the application form are processed by the University of Padua (Data Controller) in accordance with the Information Notice pursuant to Article 13 of the EU Regulation, available at https://www.unipd.it/informativa-contratti-appalti.
By signing a cooperation agreement, following the funding of the project, the University and its partners undertake to carry out the processing of personal data based on the principles of fairness, lawfulness and transparency in compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation) and d.lgs. (Legislative Decree) No. 196 of 30 June 2003, as amended and supplemented. (Personal Data Protection Code).
With reference to the processing of personal data possibly acquired in the execution of Uni-impresa projects, the obligations and responsibilities of the University and partners are defined by the collaboration agreement and, where necessary, governed by specific agreements.

Article 14 – Notices

All notices relating to the project must be sent to the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office at uni.impresa@unipd.it

Article 15 - Information on the call for applications

For information and clarifications on the call for applications, please contact the Third Mission and Research Valorization Office, Innovation, Technology Transfer and Business Relations Sector, by email at uni.impresa@unipd.it

The Rector
Daniela Mapelli