

Stellenbosch-Warwick Seed Fund Guidelines

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Background

In 2022, Stellenbosch University and the University of Warwick signed an agreement with the aim of combining expertise and engaging in collaborative activities.

One of the aims of the agreement is to support collaboration between the two universities. The Stellenbosch-Warwick Seed Fund aims to strengthen or initiate exchange between Stellenbosch and Warwick academics and professional services staff by enabling them to jointly undertake preliminary research and education projects, and organise meetings, conferences or workshops.

Objectives

The Stellenbosch-Warwick Seed Fund is designed to flexibly support Stellenbosch and Warwick researchers and professional service staff to establish new links and advance existing collaborations, by enabling activities such as:

- organisation of virtual, hybrid or in-person workshops, conferences, symposia, webinars and other relevant events;
- preliminary research, experiments and pilot studies;
- meetings to facilitate planning and development of external funding proposals;
- reciprocal or non-reciprocal visits to establish new collaborations.

Proposals should address the following points:

- Research projects should articulate the challenge the team is seeking to address, and how they are placed within the broader research landscape to do this;
- Education projects should outline ways that the project will help to internationalise teaching and learning at Stellenbosch and Warwick
- Clear definition of the objectives, outcomes and impact – including external funding targets;
- Demonstrate why neither university could tackle the challenge alone – or the additionality achieved through collaboration;
- Articulate what the funding will enable and why it is an appropriate funding source for the activity;
- Be balanced in benefit and be of strategic interest to both Stellenbosch and Warwick;
- Reflect the most efficient and effective means to achieve the project objectives.

Funding amount and duration

The Stellenbosch-Warwick Seed Fund provides funding of up to **ZAR R100,000**, for expenses incurred by Stellenbosch and **GPB £5,000**, for expenses incurred by Warwick.

We welcome proposals that offer most effective means of achieving the objectives, including those below the maximum funding threshold.

Successful projects will have a maximum duration of **24 months**. Projects can commence from **1 February 2027** and must complete activities by **31 January 2029**. As part of the application, a budget will be requested for each **financial** year of the project.

At Warwick, expenditure for FY26/27 must be incurred by 31 July 2027. Expenditure for FY27/28 must be incurred between 1 August 2027 and 31 July 2028, while expenditure for FY28/29 must be incurred between 1 August 2028 and the project end date.

Stellenbosch funds are allocated for the entire duration of the project, with 75% of the award made available during the first year, and the remaining 25% after the successful completion of the project and reporting requirements.

Applicant Eligibility

- The Stellenbosch-Warwick Seed Fund is open to staff from **all** academic departments and research units as well as all professional service staff.
- Applicants must be permanent or fixed-term, full or part-time staff. For applicants on fixed-term contracts, the duration of contract must extend beyond the project completion date.
- Applications must be co-developed by Stellenbosch and Warwick staff. A minimum of one applicant (a Project Lead) from each university is required and a co-applicant from each university is recommended (for project continuity in the event the Project Lead cannot complete the project).
- No more than one application will be considered from a Project Lead in an application round.
- Applicants who have received Stellenbosch-Warwick funding in the past are eligible to apply provided the proposed project is new or significantly different.

- Applicants whose applications were not successful in the past are eligible to apply. You should revise your application based on any feedback previously provided.

Eligible costs

Eligible costs will typically include:

- Reasonable travel and visa costs; (Warwick staff should visit Warwick's [FP16](#) and [Warwick's Travel Hub](#) before booking any travel);
- Accommodation and subsistence costs (it is expected that Stellenbosch staff participating in activities located at the University of Warwick will stay in on-campus accommodation. Warwick staff visiting Stellenbosch will be provided with a list of accommodation options on campus or in town). (Please note the relevant expense procedures: [Warwick](#))
- Reasonable event/workshop costs, including costs to involve guest speakers (activities should be held on campus or justification provided for alternative locations);
- Research/educational support (e.g. access charges, virtual platforms, consumables, transcription costs, research assistant hourly rates), not typically exceeding 20% of the total project budget.

The Seed Fund will **not** typically fund:

- Infrastructure and equipment;
- Overhead/central support charges;
- Non-Stellenbosch or Warwick staff expenses (including travel and accommodation);
- Salaries and honoraria of permanent and fixed term staff
- Conference registrations and related travel/accommodation costs (unless presenting results of the project)
- Costs already incurred prior to submission of the proposal.
- **Please note: Warwick** are not permitted to process Per diems as part of this funding (all expenses for **Warwick members of staff** must be based on receipts)

N.B. Both Universities have committed to reducing our carbon footprint. Applicants are encouraged to consider the carbon cost of the proposed activities and use virtual alternatives to travel where feasible.

Please note that the University of Warwick has recently made changes to its [travel policy](#), including an expectation that air travel should be in economy class and a "Green Levy" of £60 is charged to departments for all non-European flights.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by peer reviewers from Stellenbosch and Warwick, and a joint Stellenbosch-Warwick Selection Committee, according to the criteria and weighting set out below. Please note that peer reviewers may not be subject experts in your field. Your application should be written in clear, accessible language suitable for a general audience so that reviewers can easily understand the project. Submissions that significantly exceed the nominated word limits will not be read beyond the maximum permitted word count.

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Joint capacity:** applicants' academic credentials, joint ability to carry out the project, complementarity of the partners (including why the initiative could not occur at either university on its own, or the additionality achieved through collaboration)
- **Innovation and excellence:** the novelty of the project must be articulated for a non-specialist audience, clearly demonstrating how the proposed project will contribute to disciplinary innovation. The project must demonstrate its relevance and potential to make a meaningful contribution to tackling the challenges it seeks to address.
- **Strategic focus:** the proposal should state how the initiative advances the interests of both Warwick and Stellenbosch, and the impact of the proposed activity and expected benefits for the Schools/Departments and the collaboration.
- **Impact and potential:** clear pathway to impact and/or external funding; Applicants are advised to clearly indicate:
 - how they envisage the collaboration developing beyond this project (e.g. student opportunity, building links with industry, using preliminary data collected to scale-up the project)
 - which external funding sources are available, or in development, to sustain the collaboration

Budget Planning and Distribution

Please note that Stellenbosch and Warwick operate different financial years. Warwick financial year runs from August to July, and Stellenbosch financial year runs from February to January.

Your project budget may span more than one financial year, as illustrated below. In your application, you will be asked to specify both Stellenbosch and Warwick budget, and the amount of the award you will spend per financial year. In particular, **the Warwick budget** should be accurately allocated to financial years since this budget cannot be carried from one financial year to the next.

Applicants are encouraged to consult their local Finance Officer or the Alliance Project Team for advice when preparing their budgets. All expenditure must comply with the financial regulations and procedures of the applicant's institution.

Example:

A project funded at maximum funding threshold of GBP5,000 and ZAR100,000 commencing on 1 February 2027 and completing on 31 January 2029.

Warwick, £GBP			Stellenbosch, \$ZAR	
FY 2026/27	FY 2027/28	FY 2028/29	2027	2028
1,600	1,700	1,700	25,000	75,000

Warwick: Costs relating to the award will be charged to a profit centre within International Strategy and Relations. This means departmental budgets will remain unchanged.

Please also note that all costs associated with this award should be incurred in the indicated financial year. Any unspent budget award remaining at the end of the respective financial year(s) will be forfeited and cannot be carried over unless approved in advance. At Warwick, any expenditure processed after the relevant year-end will automatically be charged to the subsequent budget

period and must therefore be met from departmental funds. Departments will also be responsible for covering any project overspend.

Stellenbosch funding is transferred to the cost centre that is provided by the successful applicant. SU International will transfer 75% of the award during the first year, and the remaining 25% after the successful completion of the project and reporting requirements.

Statement of Support

All applications must be endorsed to ensure activities align with Faculty/Department priorities and that sufficient resourcing is available.

For Stellenbosch applicants, an e-mail from respective Heads of Department/School is sufficient as statement of support.

The statement of support must confirm the following:

The Department/School/Faculty/Portfolio confirms that:

- *the project aligns with its strategic priorities;*
- *it will provide the necessary facilities;*
- *the project would not entail a significant reduction in the ability of the staff member(s) to contribute to their core and allocated work nor an unreasonable increase in the use of any Department/School/Faculty/Portfolio/University services; and*
- *any health and safety and ethical requirements have been considered and any relevant approvals will be sought before the project begins.*

For Warwick applicants, a template statement of support can be found [here](#) and requires the signature of the Head of Department. Where technological resources are required by Warwick applicants, a supporting statement from the Academic Technology team would need to be included in the application. If it cannot be supported through existing services, some costs may need to be added to the application. See [Digital Learning Environment](#) for available tools. For projects involving doctoral students, an additional statement of support must be submitted from the student's supervisor or Head of Department.

Research Integrity and Ethics

Ethics

Research projects that involve human participants, their data or tissue, or animals **will** require appropriate ethical review. Research involving secondary analysis of publicly available data e.g. systematic reviews does **not** require ethics review, but secondary analysis of other data that are not publicly available does. Please note, data taken from social media, does **not** count as publicly available.

Ethics approval does not need to be applied for until funding has been awarded but **must** be obtained **before** projects can begin. Further information about ethics and other approvals, and how to apply for these is available on the [Research & Impact Services](#) webpages (Warwick) and the [Research Integrity and Ethics](#) webpages (Stellenbosch).

Please note that it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the ethics application is submitted and approved before the project begins.

Warwick researchers are advised to complete a Research Integrity online training module:
www.warwick.ac.uk/ritraining.

Export Control Due Diligence

As part of your application **at Warwick**, you are strongly encouraged to undertake the [Epigeum Research Integrity Training](#), including the Export Control Training Module, which can be accessed [here](#).

The PI is responsible for ensuring that the research complies with the UK Export Control Legislation. Follow [the guidance](#) by R&IS to determine whether export controls apply to your proposed research.

Submission of applications

An Application Form and an application form template are available from:

warwick.ac.uk/global/africa/fundingopportunities/stellenboschwarwickseedfund/applicationform/

Not more than ONE application will be considered from each Principal Applicant.

Applications should be submitted to:

warwick.ac.uk/global/africa/fundingopportunities/stellenboschwarwickseedfund/applicationform/

Submissions must include:

1. Completed [Project Summary and Case for Support](#) document;
2. Two short CVs - one from each of the Principal Applicants from Stellenbosch and Warwick;
3. Two statements of Support (an e-mail from Stellenbosch Head of Department/School/Centre and a signed [statement of support](#) from Warwick Head of Department)
4. Completed [budget tables](#) in Excel.

Please merge documents 1-3 into one PDF for submission, and submit document 4, the budget tables, separately as an Excel document.

The deadline for submissions to this funding round is **Friday 30 October 2026**.

Reporting

- For projects lasting two years, a brief mid-project report is to be submitted halfway through your project and should include a revised budget for year 2 (a template will be provided).
- A final report on the project is to be submitted within one month from the end of the project or funding period (a template will be provided). This report should detail the use of the funds; achievement of outputs and outcomes from the award; how the activities have contributed to the both universities' international strategy; future plans to build on the work done, and further funding applications made or planned.

- If requested, you will be expected to present the outcomes of your project at events organised by International Strategy and Relations at Warwick and SU International Stellenbosch following the completion of your project.
- The International Strategy and Relations team and the SU International team will contact you for up to three years after the completion of your project in order to gauge the longer-term impact of the funding.
- Successful applicants may be invited to assist with the evaluation of future award applications.

Further Information & Contacts

University of Warwick

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