



Guidelines: Tohoku University-Université de Lorraine Joint Research Fund 2024

Joint Call for Collaborative Projects and Exchange Activities

March 2024

After signing a framework agreement in February 2018 and a letter of intent for academic cooperation in June 2019, the two universities have signed a cooperation agreement on a double degree PhD program in September 2019, thus reinstating strongly their mutual will to develop a strategic partnership in a number of scientific areas. A joint workshop, held in Nancy in September 2019, showed the width and quality of the scientific areas of mutual interest.

To foster scientific exchanges and develop new collaborations, Tohoku University (TU) and Université de Lorraine (UL) decided to fund **four joint research projects** as result of a call initially launched at the end of 2019. A new round of funding for these projects was decided in 2022, after submission of their interim progress reports.

A **final report from these 4 projects is due in May 2024**. At that time, the two universities plan to foster further development of the momentum created by the projects, whenever this is deemed to be necessary. One thing which is of common interest to both universities is to push for crossed exchange of master students. If they wish to continue their collaboration, the existing projects will be asked to apply for this new funding when they submit their final report.

In addition to that, to foster scientific exchanges and develop new collaborations, TU and UL have decided to fund **up to two new joint research projects to start in Academic Year 2024/2025**. Each selected project will receive **up to EUR8,000 from UL and up to JPY1,300,000 from TU for two academic years**.

Policy: In line with TU and UL's commitments to equality and diversity, we encourage applications from a range of backgrounds regardless of career stage, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religion.

1. Projects

- i) This call invites new research proposals in the areas of mutual interest and complementary strengths that will strengthen the partnership between TU and UL.
- ii) Proposals must include participants from both institutions.
- iii) Applications from all fields are welcome.
- iv) Up to two joint projects will be selected for funding. Proposals will be assessed by the steering committee of the UL-TU partnership, composed of representatives from both institutions.



2. Eligibility for TU and UL participants within the scope of this call

Applications are open to TU and UL staff members as lead applicant, with the following roles:

- Professor/Professorial Teaching Fellow or equivalent
- Associate Professor or equivalent
- Senior Lecturer/Principal Researcher/Principal Research Associate/Senior Teaching Fellow or equivalent
- Lecturer/Assistant Professor/Senior Research Associate/Teaching Fellow or equivalent
- Post Doc./Researcher/Post Doc. Fellow/Research Associate or equivalent - **eligible provided the contract covers the spend and activity period**
- Applicants are not required to have a doctorate to apply, but do need to hold a role at one of the levels described above.
- PhD students are not eligible to apply.
- Projects previously selected for this joint funding program by both universities are not eligible to apply.

3. Collaboration Activities

Collaboration activities may be based on joint projects set up by faculty/staff members of both institutions, including:

- Joint research projects
- Graduate students' mobility
- Any other form of partnerships, to be promoted and implemented jointly when both TU and UL find it mutually beneficial.

The following activities are not eligible:

- Activity which does not involve TU and UL collaborators.
- Activity that has already taken place.

4. Value and Duration

Up to two successful proposals will receive up to €8,000 for up to 24 months maximum. Funding will be jointly provided by TU and UL, with 50% going to the academic teams at each respective institution. **However, only one application should be submitted.** Projects will be selected in June-July and begin from July 15 at Tohoku and Lorraine. The fund can be used to support any activity except staff salaries.



5. Timeline

Call for proposals	March 25, 2024
Deadline for submission of proposal	May 7, 2024
Communication of Results to applicants	Early July 2024
Start date of Awards (TU & UL)	July 15, 2024

6. Submission of Proposals

- i) Proposals are to be prepared jointly and submitted separately. Each proposal must be submitted by the lead to his/her own home institution by the deadline.
- ii) Applications will only be accepted via email in either PDF or Word format:
Tohoku applicants: Global Engagement Coordination Team, kokusai-c@grp.tohoku.ac.jp
Lorraine applicants: International Relations Office, drie-cooperation-contact@univ-lorraine.fr

7. Adjudication

- i) **Selection Criteria:** Both internal review committees will assess each proposal according to the following criteria:
 - **Project design and rationale** (how clearly presented and justified is the design and basis for the collaboration)
 - **Project impact** (how clearly linked are the outcomes to the planned activities and performance indicators)
 - **Impact of collaboration** (is there a distinct advantage provided by this collaboration, that is not possible by the two institutions working individually)
 - **Capacity for future collaboration** (what is the extent to which future collaborations are possible as a result of the proposed exchange activities)
- ii) A joint committee will convene to select up to two final proposals.

8. Communication of Results

Final results will be announced by means of a communication to the successful faculty members.

9. Progress Report and Final Report

All awardees must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete two reports (of no more than 15 pages each on designated Form): 1. Progress Report in April 2025, and 2. Final Report in April 2026, accordingly.