



‘Strategic Partnerships’

Projects for the further development and strengthening of scientific cooperation agreements within the framework of the university's strategic partnerships (funding category 2)

Operating as an international institution, Saarland University sets itself apart with its diverse and active partnerships in research and teaching. Saarland University attaches particular importance to its strategic partnerships and alliances in order to strengthen its unique features and its French focus as well as its profile as a cross-border and European university. Projects with these partners will receive special funding in order to explore the potential for scientific collaboration partnerships within the still relatively new Transform4Europe alliance (T4EU) and to strengthen and expand cooperation within the University of the Greater Region (UniGR) and with French and Francophone universities. For 2026/27, the responsible Internationalization Committee of the Senate has therefore allocated a total of € 250,000 from the Internationalization Fund within the framework of funding category 2, initially for a fixed-term period, for cooperation in the T4EU European university alliance, in the UniGR, and with French and Francophone partners.

Funding is available for measures that support the internationalization objectives and involve at least one partner university of the University of the Greater Region, the Transform4Europe alliance or a French or Francophone university. The funded projects should end no later than 31 December 2027.

1) A key focus is on supporting joint **research projects**. The maximum funding amount per project is 25,000 euros.

2) A further goal is for active cooperation with strategic partners to become part of everyday life at the university by supporting low-threshold projects that strengthen the **networks between the partner universities**. A smaller portion of the funding will therefore be dedicated to joint activities, for example:

- Development of degree courses or programmes
- Symposia, conferences, workshops, seminars for doctoral students



- Publications
- Excursions and cooperation visits
- Cultural events
- Student initiatives and events
- Integration of alliance partners in already existing research cooperation partnerships
- Development of joint research funding applications

The standard funding amount per project is a maximum of €5,000.

Eligible costs

Funding from the Internationalization Fund will only be provided if no standard funding options, no sufficient funding, e.g. from other central funds or via Erasmus+, or no external funding are available for the project/activity. The funds can be used to supplement acquired external funding and as initial funding for acquiring external funding.

Examples of eligible costs:

- Personnel costs
- Project costs, including funding for student assistants, teaching assignments and event organization (renting rooms, catering, communication)
- Travel expenses

The following examples are not eligible:

- Individual applications (scholarships) for students (incoming, outgoing)
- Travel expenses that can be funded via Erasmus+ mobility funds for researchers and lecturers
- Projects aimed at the internationalization of study programmes that are eligible for the teaching and studying fund



- Graduate training projects that can be funded through GradUS Global

The following groups of persons at Saarland University are **eligible to apply** for funding category 2 of the Internationalization Fund:

- Professorial staff
- Junior professors
- Academic research associates
- Lecturers with specialist teaching duties (excluding external part-time teaching staff)
- Members of the AStA and StuPa as well as (accredited) student initiatives
- Central and interdepartmental scientific institutions
- Emeriti as long as they involve a member from the above groups of people in the project.

To ensure the success of the project, the applicant's contracted term of employment should cover the duration of the proposed project.

All **projects for which funding is applied** will be evaluated according to the **following criteria**:

- Which partner universities (T4EU, UniGR and/or French, Francophone partners) are involved and to what degree are they involved? To what extent do the measures contribute to the expansion and strengthening of the cooperation?
- Is the measure designed to be sustainable? What effects are expected in the medium and long term to strengthen European higher education alliances?
- Have other funding sources been exhausted?
- Does the project help to attract further funding?
- The establishment of new contacts or the content-related expansion of existing contacts is particularly encouraged but not obligatory.
- When personnel funds are requested for employees: Why is this funding (in this amount) necessary?



- For projects with T4EU partners: To what extent do the measures support and complement the Transform4Europe projects?
- For projects with UniGR partners: To what extent do the measures support the further strengthening and expansion of the long-standing alliance of the **University of the Greater Region**, in particular through new topic areas and projects that go beyond existing cooperation partnerships?
- For projects with **French/Francophone partners**: To what extent does the project contribute to strengthening the university's focus on France?

The following criteria also apply for **research projects**:

- How innovative and topical is the issue, and what added value does the cooperation bring?
- Does the project contribute to the development and strengthening of the university alliances' and/or the university's focus areas? (Applications with T4EU partners that breathe further life into the three T4EU focus areas – digital transformation, environmental transformation and social transformation – are welcomed but not mandatory).
- Are junior researchers involved?
- Is any contribution being made by the chair or institution?

Selection process

- Please use the application form on the website.
- Applications must be sent by e-mail to the Dean of the faculty (or the management of the institution applying), who will then forward them to intfonds@uni-saarland.de stating their support in writing.
- Applications can be submitted until the following deadlines:
 - 1. March, 1. June, 15. October.
- Applications may be submitted in German, French or English. If you wish to submit an application in French or English, please enclose an abstract in German with your



application (max. length: 2,000 characters incl. spaces). The abstract should include a brief description of the proposed project and should outline how your project will contribute to achieving the university's internationalization objectives.

- Applications will be evaluated by the members of the Internationalization Committee with the support of the members of the extended Transform4Europe project team or the University of the Greater Region.
- Funding decisions will be issued within two months of application.
- All publications resulting from the funded project (e.g. posters, flyers, websites) should include the words 'funded by the Internationalization Fund of Saarland University' together with the Saarland University logo, the logo of the Internationalization Fund and the logo of the Transform4Europe alliance and the logo of the University of the Greater Region.
- The applicant will inform the university's Press and Public Relations Office about the project and the overall content, providing further information for reporting purposes if necessary.
- The applicant is required to submit a financial report (a form will be provided; for conference funding, please also attach the final programme and list of participants) no later than three months after the completion of the project.
- The applicant must also present the results of the funded project, if applicable at an event organized by the Transform4Europe project team.