



U21 GRADUATE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AWARDS  
DEADLINE: FRIDAY 6 AUGUST 2021

AWARD GUIDELINES

Applications are now open for U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Awards. These awards enable doctoral candidates to develop and implement international research collaborations within the U21 network.

This document should be read alongside the Frequently Asked Questions which will help you to understand the requirements of the awards. While we expect doctoral candidates to be deeply involved in developing their proposed project, we understand that in some institutions the application process may require that doctoral supervisors/advisors be responsible for submitting the application through institutional channels. We therefore encourage all project teams to ensure they follow the standard practices of their institution when submitting their application.

**IMPORTANT UPDATE:**

In light of COVID-19 and the impact it is having on international travel, proposals featuring virtual and digital solutions for collaboration will be prioritised. We advise not to include travel and accommodation in applications due to the uncertainty around global mobility over the next 12 months.

**Objectives**

U21's Graduate Collaborative Research Awards are designed to develop lasting professional relationships between researchers and research teams within the U21 network. Projects, which can be in any discipline or can cross disciplinary boundaries, should aid the development of transferable skills for doctoral candidates, allowing them to work independently as well as in teams on activities that benefit their doctoral research. These projects will promote networking with the aim of giving doctoral candidates a global view of problem solving and group work, and facilitate cross-cultural working practices.

**Eligibility**

The Awards fund research projects that involve doctoral candidates from at least three U21 members (see below), in at least two countries (normally from different global regions). Each project must result in publicly available outputs. These may take the form of peer-reviewed publications, exhibitions, patents, products, performances, etc. It is expected that all projects will include a training component.

**Applications may be led by doctoral candidates but must be formally supported by a supervisor/advisor, and signed off by the appropriate staff member, at the lead institution.** The budget allocated to the 2021 call is US\$30,000. It is expected that several projects will be funded. Funding will be limited to 12 months, starting from 1 November 2021, although the projects may extend beyond that year.

U21 members who are eligible for the 2021 application round are detailed below, please check that all doctoral candidates on your application are based at one of these institutions before you apply:

University of Amsterdam	Fudan University	University of Melbourne
University of Auckland	University of Glasgow	Technologico de Monterrey
University of Birmingham	University of Hong Kong	UNSW Australia
Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile	University of Johannesburg	University of Nottingham (inc. Malaysia and China campuses)
University of California – Davis	Korea University	University of Queensland

University of Connecticut	KU Leuven	National University of Singapore
University of Delhi	Lund University	Shanghai Jiao Tong University
University College Dublin	University of Maryland	Waseda University
University of Edinburgh	McMaster University	University of Zurich.

### Selection Process

A sub-committee of U21 Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies will consider all eligible applications and determine how the funding will be allocated. Their decision will be final.

No individual doctoral candidate or supervisor/advisor can benefit from more than one award in any one round of funding.

### 2021 Timeline:

- Call for applications opens: May 2021
- Deadline for applications: Friday 6 August 2021
- Decisions announced the week commencing 6 September 2021
- Funding to be transferred to the lead institution's Graduate School by Friday 8 October 2021

Applications should be forwarded to Dr Connie Wan, Researcher Engagement Manager via [connie.wan@universitas21.com](mailto:connie.wan@universitas21.com) by Friday 6 August 2021.



## U21 GRADUATE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AWARDS 2021

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### **How much can we apply for?**

The total funding for the U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Awards in 2021 is US\$30,000. Several awards will be funded each year and if your application is for more than US\$5,000 you may only receive part of the funding for which you asked.

#### **Can we apply for more than one award?**

An institution may make multiple applications in any annual award round, but no person can participate in more than one U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award project in any annual round. Further applications for follow-on or new projects may be made in subsequent years by those named on an application, provided the doctoral candidates named are still active in the doctoral programme.

#### **What is meant by a 'U21 member'?**

A U21 member is a university that is a member of the U21 network. The [U21 website](#) has details on all current U21 member universities. To meet the three U21 member requirements for these awards, at least one doctoral candidate from each of the three (or more) institutions named in the award, must participate in the research project.

#### **Why does each project have to involve at least three U21 members from at least two countries?**

The aim of these awards is to facilitate collaboration within the U21 network, rather than just support traditional bi-lateral research relationships. Working with doctoral candidates from other countries, regions and cultures can bring new dimensions and questions to your research. For this reason the selection committee may give preference to applications that involve doctoral candidates in different regions, rather than just in two or more countries. These awards are designed to support collaborative team based projects that draw on complementary strengths in the participating universities, not just mobility or exchange projects (many of the U21 member universities have internal funds available for mobility activities).

#### **What is meant by 'doctoral candidates'?**

Doctoral candidates include all those in a U21 institution who are undertaking a PhD or a named doctorate, including a professional doctorate. At the time of the award all doctoral candidates named in the application must be active in a doctoral programme. Doctoral candidates whose theses/dissertations are under examination are not eligible to apply for, or be named in, a U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award.

#### **As a doctoral candidate, how can I contact doctoral candidates in other U21 institutions?**

All doctoral candidates who intend to apply for a U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award are encouraged to discuss their intentions with their supervisors/advisors. It may be that your supervisors/advisors already have research collaborators or know supervisors/advisors in other U21 institutions, and can facilitate contact with doctoral candidates at these universities.

**NEW FOR 2021:** U21 will be facilitating social Zoom meet ups for prospective GCRA applicants to join and meet their potential collaborators. Prospective applicants will be provided access to U21 Community, the network's new connection platform, where they can communicate further via chatrooms and fora. A sign up form will be

circulated via your Graduate School (or equivalent). The dates and times of the online meet ups will be communicated in due course.

We would also encourage doctoral candidates to network at international conferences they attend. Take a look at where the [U21 members](#) are based before you attend any conferences; you could end up sitting next to a future graduate collaborator.

### **What sort of research projects will be funded?**

U21 institutions are comprehensive universities, offering doctorates in many different subject areas. For this reason we have not specified the type of research projects that will be funded.

Some doctoral candidates may wish to pursue subject-specific projects, enriching their doctoral research by working with colleagues around the network. Others may wish to enhance their research by engaging in an inter- or multi-disciplinary project, with doctoral candidates from each institution bringing specific skills and approaches to the topic. The selection committee will judge each project on its own merits. Details of previously funded projects can be found [here](#).

### **What can the funding be used for?**

These awards can be used to fund operational expenses associated with a particular research project. This may include but are not limited to:

- costs of virtual meetings and digital collaboration tools
- laboratory consumables
- field costs
- IT services etc.

In light of COVID-19 and the impact it is having on international travel, proposals featuring virtual and digital solutions for collaboration will be prioritised. We advise not to include travel and accommodation in your applications due to the uncertainty around global mobility over the next 12 months.

A U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award may not be used to:

- buy equipment
- pay for fractional staff salaries
- cover overheads/research office administration fees

Each application must include a budget outlining how the requested sum will be spent. If the application is for partial funding of a project, the budget must indicate how the U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award component of the funding will be spent and the application should provide evidence that other sources of funding have already been secured or are likely or forthcoming.

### **What happens if we don't spend our entire award within 12 months?**

Ensure your deliverables are clear and achievable within the 12 month timeframe, remember this is a small collaborative project to develop new skills not a full PhD project. Each award is administered by the lead institution's Graduate School. At the end of the 12 month period a report will be required covering both research outputs and budget spend. If all funds have not been used at this point, U21 will consult with the lead institution's Graduate School to determine if remaining funding can be accessed after the 12 month deadline or should be returned.

### **What currency do I use in the budget?**

Please ensure that you use US\$ for your budget, as that is the currency that funds for successful projects will be transferred in.

### **What sort of training is expected?**

The training component of a U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award will vary, depending on the project. It may include, but is not limited to: dealing with cross-cultural research practices; enhanced teamwork; participating in an on-line seminar series; developing skills in public engagement; peer-to-peer learning; collaborative project management; or using the internet and social media to showcase research. For examples of training take a look at the previously funded projects outlined on the [U21 website](#).

### **What outputs are expected?**

Given the varied nature of the projects, the outputs from any single award may include: single or co-authored peer-reviewed publication(s); a product; a public performance; a virtual or physical exhibition; software; a start-up; or a website. For examples of outputs take a look at the previously funded projects outlined on the [U21 website](#). All outputs funded in total or in part by a U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award should acknowledge the support of U21; U21 branding collateral will be made available to successful applicants.

### **Can I include colleagues from a non-U21 university or a non-university partner on the application?**

No. U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Awards can only include university colleagues from within the U21 network.

### **Are there any special requirements I need to be aware of before submitting my application?**

Applicants should be aware that their national research regulations may not apply in other countries and as such this may affect their ability to undertake certain types of research within a U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Award – e.g. where ethical approval is required. If you have any concerns, we recommend that you discuss internally with your supervisors/advisors and/or research office before applying.

Projects which may generate novel IP are advised to have arrangements in place covering IP ownership prior to application; again, we recommend discussing internally with your research office if you have any queries.

### **Will I need a visa to take part in a U21 Graduate Research Collaboration Award?**

If your proposed project includes mobility between U21 members, the doctoral candidates in your project team who will be undertaking the mobility may require a visa. The International Offices in your home and host institutions will be able to provide information on what types of visa may be required and details on how to apply.

### **When will we know if our application is successful?**

The lead applicant will be informed of the outcome the week commencing 6 September 2021.

### **Who decides which projects get funded?**

A sub-committee of U21 Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies will consider all eligible applications and determine how the funding will be allocated. Their decision is final.

### **What are the judging criteria for these awards?**

When reviewing the applications, the judges will be looking for evidence of the following: the project is truly international; the project is driven by the doctoral candidates; the project is realistic in terms of management and ambition; there are clear project outcomes and outputs; there is a professional development / training opportunity for the doctoral candidates involved; and that the budget is realistic.

### **If we are funded, how can we access our award?**

The Graduate School at the lead academic's institution will administer the funding for your award. Please ensure that your Graduate School approves your application. When you are informed of your success, you will be told when the funds will be available and who to contact.

### **If we are funded, what are our reporting requirements?**

All successful applicants are required to write a one-page report within 12 months of receiving their award, outlining the work undertaken and any outputs to date. Project teams are also encouraged to prepare a short video report to showcase their project outputs. This may be posted on the U21 website.

All outputs, including publications, presentations, or performances resulting from a U21-supported project should acknowledge support from the U21 Graduate Collaborative Research Awards. All outputs produced or published after the award has expired should also be reported to U21.