

The University of Glasgow – University of Sydney Health Inequalities Initiative

Guidelines for Applicants

Purpose

As strategic partners, the University of Sydney (University of Sydney) and the University of Glasgow (UofG) are committed to achieving impact through collaboration in research and education.

The **Health Inequalities Initiative** is intended to strengthen this priority partnership through support for collaborative projects involving multidisciplinary teams that are explicitly positioned within the broader systems framework for the Health Inequality initiative. The aim is to leverage existing collaborations to resource next-phase projects as well as develop sustainable new collaborations that lead to external funding, joint research outputs (including publications, public policy etc) and international research networks that are capable of producing impactful societal change. Pump-priming funding will support researchers from University of Sydney and UofG to engage in collaboration with a focus on health inequalities and to develop multi and interdisciplinary cutting-edge research projects with the potential to create academic and societal impact.

Health inequalities exist and are growing at local, national and global levels, impacting lives and threatening social cohesion. The causes are many, arising from the way basic human biology interacts with societal and environmental systems. Accordingly, tackling health disparities requires many disciplines to work together within a complex adaptive systems framework: no single discipline can understand, let alone solve, the problem.

The Universities of Glasgow and Sydney are ideally placed to tackle the challenge of health inequalities:

- 1) Together we possess strengths across a comprehensive range of relevant disciplines. By bringing together leading researchers from a diversity of disciplines we can bring new perspectives to understanding the causes and consequences of health inequalities¹ from the molecular to the societal.
- 2) Critically we have developed internationally leading capacity to convene agile and innovative interdisciplinary teams focused on complex societal challenges, e.g. in the Multidisciplinary Initiative (MDI) program at Sydney and Advanced Research Centre at the University of Glasgow.
- 3) Both Sydney and Glasgow demonstrate marked health inequalities within our richly ethnically and socioeconomically diverse populations, setting the two cities up as exemplars for comparative study and design of systems interventions.

¹ Including basic research into immune, inflammatory and cardiometabolic diseases, clinical medicine and health systems, one health, nutrition and food systems, animal health and disease/zoonosis, food governance and security, physical activity, sleep, stigma, environmental change, biodiversity, ecosystems science, economics, policy, planetary health, sustainability, behaviour change, health literacy, political and social theory, history and philosophy of science, ethics - and more.

Approach

In the first round, pump-priming funding will be offered via two tracks:

Track 1

Funding of up to £50k/project for 2-3 projects will support partnerships with a demonstrable track record of existing collaboration between UofG and University of Sydney researchers in the area of health inequalities. It is expected that this funding will help to accelerate the preparation of major collaborative external grant applications to be submitted in the 2024-2025 academic year. Evidence of external funding submissions will be required in final project reports.

Track 2

Funding of up to £20k/project for 2-3 projects will support new partnerships in the area of health inequalities involving UofG and University of Sydney researchers with no prior track record of collaboration. It is expected that this funding will help to lay the foundations for the preparation and submission of collaborative external grant applications in the 2024-2025 academic year and beyond.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to form research teams that span three or more of the following disciplinary areas: arts, humanities and social sciences, life and environmental sciences, engineering and physical sciences, and health and medical sciences. To do this, they should consider engaging existing collaborative networks, thereby leveraging the University of Sydney-UofG funding to achieve greater scale, impact and innovation. Research teams are also encouraged to include PhD or masters by research students, postdocs, early- and mid-career researchers and researchers on sabbatical leave.

1. Eligibility

- 1.1. Proposals are invited from academic staff from all disciplines at University of Sydney and UofG and their affiliated Research Centres, Institutes, and Multidisciplinary Initiatives. Proposals must be led by two academic staff members (one each from the University of Sydney and University of Glasgow)
- 1.2. Applicants from affiliated Research Centres and Institutes must be University Title Holders (applicable only to applicants from University of Sydney).
- 1.3. Chief Investigators/Principal Investigators must be employed on a full-time, part-time (appointed at least 0.5 FTE), fixed term or continuing basis. If on a fixed term contract, the end date must be beyond the funding period.
- 1.4. PhD and masters by research students, post-docs, and research assistants/associates are not eligible to apply as Chief Investigators/Principal Investigators but they are encouraged to join the applications.
- 1.5. Research teams applying for track 1 funding must demonstrate strong existing research connections between the two institutions.

2. Duration

Funding is available from September 2024

3. Timeline

Applications open	13 th May 2024
Intention to submit	31 st May 2024
Full application	17 th June 2024
Applicants notified	August 2024
Projects start	August/Sept 2024
Latest date for projects to end	31 st July 2025
Final reports due	30 th October 2025
Final reports update	31 st July 2026

All proposals must be submitted using the Health Inequalities initiative application form:

[USyd on Sharepoint](#)

[UofG on the web.](#)

All applications must have the support of the relevant University of Sydney Head of School and UofG Head of School.

4. Eligible Grant Activities

4.1. Expenses/activities that **will be considered** for funding include:

- Airfares: Only travel on economy class will be considered;
- Other travel expenses (e.g. train, rental car);
- Costs for hosting a seminar/conference or workshop;
- Accommodation and subsistence;
- Salaries or salary supplementation;
- Consumables;
- Publications and printing costs;
- Costs associated with the preparation of collaborative external grant applications.

4.2. All travel activities must comply with the guidelines of the respective universities.

- **UofG** – All Glasgow travel must comply with the [Travel Policy](#) and travelers should consult the [Sustainable Business Travel Guidance](#).

Activities that **will not be considered** for funding:

- General teaching;
- An individual staff member's research projects, unless as catalytic funding for the establishment of an international research collaboration with the prospect of external funding;
- Event registration fees;
- Website development;
- Scholarships for students;
- Course fees for international students;
- Bench fees;
- Mobile phone cards;
- Entertainment costs; and

- Computers, including laptops (excluding access to high-performance computers or other specialised applications that are justified by the project) and basic computing facilities such as printers, word processing and other standard software.

5. Application Submission

- 5.1. An Intention to submit must be submitted by 31st May 2024 via email to cpc.re@sydney.edu.au AND externalrelations-partnershipfunding@glasgow.ac.uk. This should include the working project title, details of the research team (where known) and a short summary of the proposed project (~100 words).
- 5.2. Full proposals (application form and the two-page case for support) must be submitted by 17th June 2024 using the Health Inequalities initiative application form.
- 5.3. All applications must be jointly submitted by a Chief Investigator from University of Sydney and a Principal Investigator from University of Glasgow to the following email addresses: cpc.re@sydney.edu.au AND externalrelations-partnershipfunding@glasgow.ac.uk
- 5.4. All applications must have the support of the relevant Head of School:
University of Sydney Head of School using [this form](#)
University of Glasgow Head of School in the form of a confirmation email attached to the application submission.
- 5.5. Only complete submissions will be considered.
- 5.6. Late applications will not be considered.

6. Assessment Process

Award selection will be made by a joint committee formed by members of both universities, which reserves final authority over the selection of projects taking into account university and faculty strategic priorities, and the availability of funds.

7. Scoring and Selection Criteria

- 7.1. Only applications that align with the theme of health inequalities will be assessed (see Purpose).
- 7.2. Criteria do not have weightings; proposals are assessed holistically. Each proposal will be assessed according to the selection criteria described below.

Score	Category	Justification
4	Excellent	Proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor
3	Very Good	Proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present
2	Good	Proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present
1	Weak	Criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses

Selection Criteria	Description
Quality & Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly describe the objectives and methodology to be employed in the proposed project. Alignment with the health inequalities theme, the objectives of this initiative, and external funder's priorities and schemes (specific to Track 1) will be considered in combination with the soundness of the concept and credibility of the proposed methodology. Track 1: clear identification of a suitable external funding scheme and alignment of the proposal with the principles of the funding scheme. Describe how the research team spans three or more of the following disciplinary areas: arts, humanities and social sciences, life and environmental sciences, engineering and physical sciences, and health and medical sciences in order to bring together the necessary expertise to carry out the project. The 2-page CVs of the Chief Investigators/Principal Investigators will be taken into consideration. For Track 1 evidence of the existing partnership to include collaborative activity to date, applications, awards, research publications etc. will also be considered (separate section in application form).
Execution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed timeframes and budget requests should be realistic and appropriate (separate sections in application form). Describe plans to enable the generation of preliminary data to strengthen the preparation of major collaborative external grant applications (Track 1). The long-term plan for engagement to attract research funding (Track 2) and produce publications (Track 1 & 2) will be taken into consideration.
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how the project will strengthen (Track 1) or establish (Track 2) a durable cooperation between the universities and participants in the area of health inequalities. Explain how the project is expected to advance the field and enable societal impact in the area of health inequalities. Explain how the project activities and results will be communicated to different target audiences.

8. Expected Outcomes

Capturing the outcomes of successful projects is vital in helping to measure the overall success and impact of the Health Inequalities initiative.

Track 1: a major collaborative grant application (>£1m) in the 2024-25 academic year

Track 2: developed plan to sustain the collaborative partnership leading to future funding bids.

Industry engagement is encouraged, but not expected. If proposals include industry engagement, then details should be provided in the timeline/activities section of the application.

9. Notification of Application Outcomes

Successful applicants will receive a letter of award outlining the process to accept the award including payment.

10. Change of Investigator

Applicants should contact the Program Coordinator at each institution. Such changes will need to be approved and documented.

11. Forfeiture of Grants

- 11.1. For the University of Sydney, grants must be spent by 31 December 2024.
For the University of Glasgow, grants must be spent by the end of July 2025.
- 11.2. It is recommended that you use your awarded funds within your allocated timeframe and spend as much as possible upfront (suggested use of funds include advanced purchase of flight tickets, pre-pay accommodation etc). Any unspent funds at the end of the funding period will be retrieved and no funding can be carried forward.
- 11.3. For University of Sydney Chief Investigators, each month, funds matching actual expenditure from the previous month will be transferred into the Chief Investigator's university project account by Corporate Finance. The transfer of funds will cease when the awarded amount is reached or 31 December 2024, whichever comes first. Any expenditure above the awarded amount will need to be cleared to another Faculty/School account (such as consulting or other as appropriate).

12. Extensions

Under exceptional circumstances if there is a well justified need for extension Chief Investigators should approach their Program Coordinator to discuss their circumstances.

13. Financial and Reporting Obligations

- 13.1. The funding should only be used for the approved project and in accordance with the proposal and the budget plan. It must not be used for any other purposes and prior approval from both universities is needed for any variation in the budget items. Request for variations from original proposals must be submitted to both universities for approval.
- 13.2. Awardees must adhere to the purchasing guidelines of the respective universities to which reimbursement is to be sought. Reimbursement of each expenditure item will be capped at the approved amount.
- 13.3. Awardees must submit a final report using the report pro-forma which will be issued when they are notified of the award. The final report must be completed by 30 October 2025 and an update to the final report must be submitted before 31 July 2026.
- 13.4. Failure to submit a completed report will result in all members of the project team being ineligible to submit future funding applications.
- 13.5. The activation of research funding accounts are not tied to ethics/other approvals being obtained. It is the responsibility of Chief Investigators to ensure that no work requiring approval is commenced until such approvals are in place.

14. Marketing and Communications

Awardees may be contacted for the purposes of promoting their successful funding application and informing others of their research.

15. Publications

Any publications (e.g. abstracts, articles) or dissemination (e.g. public presentations) arising from activities supported by the Health Inequalities initiative should acknowledge assistance received. The standard acknowledgment is “University of Sydney–University of Glasgow Health Inequalities Initiative”.

Publications should appear in internationally recognised scholarly journals and should be published within 18 months after the end of the project.

Copies or notifications should be submitted to the Office of Global and Research Engagement at University of Sydney and Recruitment and International Relations Team at Glasgow.

Further Information

For further information please contact the Program Coordinators:

The University of Sydney
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