Call for research proposals

ENGAGE.EU research label 2025

The second ENGAGE.EU Call for innovative bottom-up scientific initiatives is now open!

Academics from ENGAGE.EU universities (Hanken, Luiss, NHH, Tilburg University, UMA, UNWE, URL, UT Capitole, WU and Saint-Gallen as *Associated partner* from higher education) are invited to submit proposals for bottom-up scientific initiatives to receive through the availability of seed funding.

This call aims to encourage ENGAGE.EU scientific collaborations and foster new opportunities to develop initiatives across the alliance. Senior researchers and early-stage researchers, including PhD students, are encouraged to participate in this call.

The ENGAGE.EU research label funds **smaller scale, limited in time, bottom-up initiatives**, to facilitate the initiation of potential long-term collaborative activities within the alliance. This contributes to the fulfilment of the ENGAGE.EU's vision and mission, with a focus on supporting early-stage researchers.

Application deadline is 31 May 2025.

ELIGIBLE INITIATIVES

To be eligible, applications must:

- connect **at least three partner universities of the alliance** but we strongly encourage involving four or more ENGAGE.EU partners
- be related to **at least one societal challenge** (SDG[1])
- not already receive Horizon Europe or Erasmus + funding for this specific initiative (i.e., no double EU funding of activities); also, the ENGAGE.EU research label cannot fund/support any initiatives that aim to apply for EU funding either.

Engaging and involving ENGAGE.EU external partners and stakeholders*, while not mandatory, is strongly encouraged.

*By 'external partners and stakeholders,' we refer to societal organisations, enterprises, municipalities, and NGOs. Our alliance will assist you in identifying and connecting with suitable affiliated partners (see ENGAGE.EU local contact points in paragraph ENGAGE.EU LOCAL POINTS)

Candidates are also invited to explain if and how their initiative relates to the Strategic Agenda[2] of the alliance.

The ENGAGE.EU research label funding aims to support initiative of scientific collaborations in their early stages. Therefore, seed-funded initiatives can fall under a wide variety of definitions such as:

Joint workshop
Conference
Cross-disciplinary seminar
Dissemination event/content for the public at large
Research training
Conducting surveys, developing research materials
Preparation for large-scale proposal**
Producing awareness-raising material for the Alliance
Joint publications

**Please note that the label cannot fund/support initiatives that aim to apply for EU funding.

This list above is not exhaustive, the Selection Committee will consider applications suggesting other initiatives too, provided they clearly state how they match the scope of the seed funding scheme.

Initiatives taking place online are eligible.

FUNDING

For the call, funding will be **up to 8.500 EUR** per initiative with a **total ceiling of 45.000 EUR**.

Please note: each partner's home university will receive and manage their funding once the initiative is completed. As a result, the proposal must clearly outline how the **budget will be distributed among the partner universities**.

[1] 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

[2] ENGAGE.EU R&I Thematic focus are: Digitalisation; Sustainability and Climate change; Health and Well-being; Diversity; Strong Institutions.

Example 1: a workshop involving partners from Tilburg University, NHH and URL is scheduled at UNWE. The lead applicant will describe the distribution of funding among the participating universities. For instance, UNWE will cover the cost of hosting the event which amounts to 1.500 EUR, while Tilburg University, NHH and URL will cover the travel costs for their researchers attending the workshop in Sofia, at 2.000 EUR each. The Selection Committee will then grant 1.500 EUR to UNWE for meals and/or rental of a conference room, while Tilburg University, NHH and URL will each receive 2.000 EUR each to cover their respective travel costs.

Example 2: a team of five researchers from WU, Hanken and Luiss are seeking to collaborate on writing a scientific paper. One author from WU takes the lead and proposes to purchase a dataset for 3.500 EUR, while the other researchers require 5.000 EUR to cover their travel expenses for a writing week.

The lead applicant should provide a detailed and accurate budget that clearly shows how the funds will be distributed among the initiatives' partners. This will help to identify and address any potential overspending issues. It is important to note that **ENGAGE.EU research label's seed funding will not cover any overspending of the total budget**.

A template budget sheet is available on page 11.

Additional funding (co-funding) from other sources is permitted, even encouraged, providing those applicants do not receive Horizon Europe or Erasmus + funds (i.e., no double EU funding of activities). The ENGAGE.EU research label cannot fund or support any initiatives that aim to apply for EU funding either.

After the Selection Committee announces the winning proposal(s), **the winners need to contact their ENGAGE.EU local point** (see list on page 6)**.**

The home university of each applicant will be responsible for monitoring spending and ensuring compliance with eligible costs, in accordance with both their internal budgetary rules and Erasmus+ regulations.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

All expenses directly related to the initiative are eligible if they are listed in the estimated budget and incurred in connection with the expected results **while adhering to the internal budgetary rules of the respective university responsible for spending the grant**. Costs must be identifiable, verifiable and comply with the principle of sound financial management, particularly regarding economy and efficiency.

Examples of eligible costs: ***
Travel and subsistence costs (flight, train and bus tickets, car rental, insurance, daily allowance, etc...); Costs of hosting seminars/conferences or workshops (e.g., venue rental, catering, lodging, etc...); Purchase of equipment or data; Publications costs; Open Access fees.

***This list above is not exhaustive. To determine if specific expenses are eligible, applicants must check with their university's internal budgetary rules. Therefore, it is highly recommended to contact the ENGAGE.EU local contact points (see paragraph 7) before submitting the application.

SELECTION PROCESS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

The ENGAGE.EU Selection Committee comprises nine academics each from a different partner university. Their role is to evaluate, select, and oversee funded proposals. The Selection Committee may seek advice from external assessors.

To assess all applications, the Selection Committee will apply the following criteria and sub-criteria:

QUALITY – objectives and goals of the initiative; scientific content; participants complementarity; link to SDGs and to the alliance Strategic Agenda; innovativeness.

FEASIBILITY – practical description of the initiative; realistic budget and workplan.

IMPACT – number of participating universities from the alliance; potential impact for society and on the alliance as a whole; involvement of external partners and stakeholders; dissemination; sustainability and scalability.

REPORTING AND DISSIMINATION

FINAL REPORT

A final report is expected to be submitted via email to myriam.greusard@ut-capitole.fr no later than 30 days after the funding period ends.

It should contain a concise explanatory summary and a sufficiently detailed financial report to assist the task team in evaluating the initiative's performance and assessing the effectiveness of the seed-funded label.

Your ENGAGE.EU local contact point (see paragraph below with list of contacts) can send a report template to the lead applicants in advance.

DISSEMINATION AND CREDITS

The ENGAGE.EU website will publish a summary of each funded initiative. Therefore, the lead applicant is expected to document the initiative, take photographs to illustrate it, and prepare a short summary (in the form of a post or story).

The summary should be sent to myriam.greusard@ut-capitole.fr within 30 days after the funding period ends. The ENGAGE.EU local contact points are available to assist with organising events or communicating about your initiative and findings.

All results and dissemination materials must acknowledge the funding received from ENGAGE.EU following these guidelines. The same applies to any events organised as part of the initiative:

- Logo of both ENGAGE.EU and Erasmus+ used on the initiative’s communication materials.
- Mention ENGAGE.EU at the opening of the event.

- Take photographs to illustrate the publication of the results. Record the photo credits for each photo and ensure that individuals have given their consent to be photographed.

APPLICATION AND TIMELINE

The application form needs to be submitted electronically to myriam.greusard@ut-capitole.fr by the deadline: **12:00 pm (CET) – 31 May 2025**. It will not be possible to apply after the deadline.

Applications must be submitted in English.

The budget must be submitted by filling out the table available in the annex.

One application per initiative needs to be submitted.

Call open (Spring call)	**15 April 2025**
Call close/application deadline	31 May 2025
Results announced	1 July 2025
Funding period	September 2025 to December 2026
Online summary and financial report submitted	Respectively 30 days after the conclusion of the initiative

The timeline might be subject to changes, considering the administrative and financial processes.

Applicant will submit the online application (i.e., application form and budget sheet) to the address myriam.greusard@ut-capitole.fr.

For additional questions, each applicant may reach out to their ENGAGE.EU local contact point at his/her university or write to myriam.greusard@ut-capitole.fr

ENGAGE.EU LOCAL POINTS

Each applicant can contact his/her local university's ENGAGE.EU team member for questions specifically related to his/her institution and this call:

Hanken: Dr. Sirpa Aalto, sirpa.aalto@hanken.fi

Luiss: Aurora Alegiani aalegiani@luiss.it

NHH: Dr. Heather Arghandeh Paudler, Heather.Argandeh.Paudler@nhh.no

Tilburg: Rianne Strijker, r.strijker@tilburguniversity.edu

UMA: Sati Cakar, sati.cakar@uni-mannheim.de

UNWE: Assoc. Prof. Hristina Harizanova-Bartos, hharizanova@unwe.bg

URL: Anna Caellas Camprubí, acaellas@rectorat.url.edu

UT Capitole: Myriam Greusard, myriam.greusard@ut-capitole.fr

WU: Rina Gjana, rina.gjana@wu.ac.at

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Will an online info session be organised?

Yes, you can attend ENGAGE.EU online briefing session on **6 May 2024 from 12:00 p.m to 1:00 p.m CET**. It will be recorded and the video will be made available on the ENGAGE.EU research label webpage. **To join us, please click here**

- How can I find initiative partners in other ENGAGE.EU universities?

You can search for potential partners on the ENGAGE.EU Research Community Platform, and you can also contact your ENGAGE.EU local contact point who will assist you in identifying and connecting with suitable partners (see list of contacts in paragraph ENGAGE.EU LOCAL POINTS).

- Can we involve researchers from outside the alliance to participate in the call?

Yes, you can. However, any partner outside the alliance involved in your initiative will not benefit from ENGAGE.EU research label funding.

- If my initiative involves participants (e.g., for a research training) can they be from outside of the alliance?

Yes, but your initiative must prioritise participants from ENGAGE.EU universities.

- How detailed should the provisional budget be?

Listing all costs associated with the budget's activities is crucial. However, the provisional budget should not be automatically set to the maximum amount. Please note that the compliance of the expenses will be checked by the applicant's home university, and not by the ENGAGE.EU research label team.