

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF NEW BILATERAL COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS  
BETWEEN THE UNIVERSIDADE DE SÃO PAULO  
AND THE UNIVERSITÉ LIBRE DE BRUXELLES**

### **Context**

Universidade de São Paulo (USP) and Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) have a long tradition of academic and scientific cooperation in many different disciplines. In 2013, USP and ULB formalized this cooperation in the form of a strategic partnership agreement, stating that both institutions were committed to encouraging, strengthening and supporting their common research and teaching activities, as well as the exchange of students, doctoral students, post-doctoral students, researchers and professors. Extended in 2019 for a new 5-year period, the strategic partnership agreement was renewed again in November of 2024 on the occasion of the Belgian official mission to Brazil.

In order to give a more concrete form to their strategic partnership and stimulate the creation of new bilateral projects, they have now decided to set up a joint annual fund to allocate seed money to teams of USP and ULB colleagues wishing to launch a new form of collaboration.

### **Objectives of the common fund**

The fund aims to:

- Encourage the emergence of strategic inter-university initiatives between the two institutions, focusing on centers of excellence in education and research;
- Support innovative projects that have a structuring effect and offer medium-term prospects for the development of the strategic partnership;
- Provide financial support to initiatives that can lead to more substantial external funding at local, federal, European and/or international level.

Projects may take the following forms (non-exhaustive list):

- Meetings to prepare a joint research project and/or an application in the framework of calls for proposals by funding agencies like FAPESP, Horizon Europe, etc.;
- Joint scientific publication;
- Joint teaching project (field camp, course, development of teaching materials);
- Preparing and holding a conference or seminar;
- Setting up a doctoral network;
- Organizing a doctoral school or workshop for young researchers;
- Creating a COIL, etc.

## **Eligibility**

The fund supports projects in all fields of study and research. New projects will be granted a priority, but existing projects are eligible if the added value and innovative aspect of the application is clearly demonstrated and justified.

The funding granted is not intended to finance a medium- or long-term project: it is a start-up aid.

To be eligible, a project must have at least one lead applicant from USP and one from ULB. They should elaborate the proposal in common and apply together (see section “Application”). Both must be active professors, holding a permanent position in the academic staff of their university. PhD students may be added to the team list and participate in the project but not as Principal Investigators. Postdoctoral researchers are not eligible.

## **Funding**

The maximum amount of funding per project is EUR 10,000<sup>1</sup>. The budget share of each team must not necessarily be balanced (EUR 5,000 for the ULB team and EUR 5,000<sup>2</sup> for USP team) but should rather reflect the realities of the project.

Funds from each partner shall be restricted for the expenses of its own academics and researchers, including PhD candidates. They can cover (non-exhaustive list):

- Mobility (travel, accommodation and food expenses);
- Logistic costs in case the project is a conference or seminar (rental of a venue, rental of audio or video equipment, etc.)<sup>3</sup>;
- Costs related to scientific surveys;
- Costs of joint publications; etc.

Grant funds may not be used to pay for teaching, salaries, tuition fees or purchase of infrastructure or equipment (except consumables if they are closely related to the conduct and outcome of the project). Allocating money to third-party participants (an outside speaker for a conference for example) is not allowed.

The funding will be granted for a duration of 12 months, starting when the results of the call are announced, i.e. from April 2026 to March 2027.

## **Application and deadlines**

Proposals must be jointly submitted by USP and ULB faculty in English. Each Principal Investigator (PI) must submit the same proposal to the scientific coordination of their home institution, including the following information:

### 1. Annex I - Application Form:

- Title of the project.
- Names and academic affiliation of the two PIs with contact information.
- List of additional participants from both sides.

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<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to its amount in Reais (R\$), upon conversion made based on the sale price of the euro, published by the Central Bank of Brazil, referring to the date of publication of results, with no change due to any exchange variation.

<sup>2</sup> Likewise.

<sup>3</sup> For USP, it is strongly recommended that the Principal Investigator (PI) verifies the feasibility of the suggested expense with their teaching and research unit's purchasing department.

- Up to 1,000-word presentation/description of the project, and a list of five keywords.
- Project Overview:
  - Program of activities;
  - Expected results and plus value for both institutions;
  - Perspectives of future collaborations.

2. Annex II - Budget table.

3. Annex III - Letters of support from the Faculty Dean or Head of Department at each home institution.

4. Annex IV - CVs (for both PIs).

Call opens on **November 24, 2025**. Joint proposals can be submitted by **February 9, 2026**. Results will be communicated by **March 27, 2026**. In case funding is granted, the proposed activities should be conducted until **March 31, 2027**.

Researchers must submit their joint proposal simultaneously to ULB and to USP.

Proposals must be sent electronically to the following addresses:

ULB:	USP:
ULB International Office <a href="https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=XhS1ML11EkK7Ao_5wOpK6Xj7s50--dNqi294rg20oRUODVCS1RFQIE3R0IXM002Nk43UUE2REkzUS4u&amp;route=shorturl">https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=XhS1ML11EkK7Ao_5wOpK6Xj7s50--dNqi294rg20oRUODVCS1RFQIE3R0IXM002Nk43UUE2REkzUS4u&amp;route=shorturl</a>	USP International Cooperation Office (AUCANI) - <a href="https://uspdigital.usp.br/mundus/editalintercambiopublicoListar?nivpbcavo=D&amp;codmnu=3144">https://uspdigital.usp.br/mundus/editalintercambiopublicoListar?nivpbcavo=D&amp;codmnu=3144</a> (Call reference # <b>2196</b> )

#### **Evaluation process and criteria**

For each call, the relevant authorities of each university will first evaluate the applications internally, at institutional level. The final selection of projects will be made by a joint committee composed of representatives appointed by the partners.

Projects will be evaluated on:

- Their scientific/educational value;
- Their relevance, feasibility and innovative nature;
- The adequacy of planned activities and requested budget;
- The prospects for further development and funding.

Financial support from the faculties/departments/laboratories involved will be considered an asset in the evaluation.

#### **Reporting**

Successful applicants will be required to submit a two- to three-page final report no later than one month after the end of the grant period. The report should include the following information: proposed

objectives and activities undertaken; project outcomes and achievements, including key findings and future plans; a brief assessment of actual expenditure against plan.

Reports must be sent to:

ULB:	USP:
International Office Attention of Yvon Molinghen E-mail: <a href="mailto:yvon.molinghen@ulb.be">yvon.molinghen@ulb.be</a>	USP International Cooperation Office (AUCANI) E-mail: <a href="mailto:international.networks@usp.br">international.networks@usp.br</a> Cc: <a href="mailto:aucanifin@usp.br">aucanifin@usp.br</a>

### **Application Timeline 2025/26**

- Applications open: 24 November 2025
- Applications close: 9 February 2026
- Successful awards announced by: 27 March 2026
- Funding available to complete project activity: 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027

### **Useful Contacts**

Applicants can contact the following resource persons in they have questions or queries regarding the call, or if they need help, clarifications or additional information:

At USP: USP International Cooperation Office - <https://uspdigital.usp.br/mundus/faleConosco>

At ULB: Yvon Molinghen, by telephone 02/650.67.05, by e-mail [yvon.molinghen@ulb.be](mailto:yvon.molinghen@ulb.be)