Seed Money Projects

Call for Proposals 2027-01

Application deadline:	01 November 2026
Possible applicants:	ORIGINS PIs
Funding period:	2027
max. proposal length:	4 pages
Application address:	odele.straub@origins-cluster.de
Selection meeting:	19 November 2026

Scope of the Funding

Seed Money is meant to transform highly original and unique ideas into projects. All proposed projects need to be supported by a principal investigator (PI) of the ORIGINS Excellence Cluster. This funding scheme aims to identify and support innovative research and development of projects in all fields of the ORIGINS Cluster, where such non-bureaucratic financial support can contribute significantly to knowledge gain and progress.

Procedure

One to two calls per year for applications are sent out to all principal investigators and postdocs of the ORIGINS Cluster. A selection committee (see website) will evaluate submitted applications. The competitive selection process includes a written **application** (as outlined here) and an short (**5-10 minute) oral presentation** of the project. In the final step, the research board must approve the selection committee's funding recommendation.

Evaluation Criteria

The concept of the application must be an innovative approach and thus should not be a part of or supplement existing funding support. It can however be a – so far unsupported – new idea within a larger collaboration. If that is the case, this has to be stated explicitly and clearly described.

The following evaluation criteria apply:

- originality of the approach
- novelty of the research concept, uniqueness with regard to international competition
- after the motto "no risk, no gain," a certain amount of risk.
- involvement of cluster members and relevance to the research of the ORIGINS Cluster
- follow-up research after Seed Project
- quality of the project planning, structure and cost plan, plausible budget request
- interdisciplinary nature/amount of collaboration between ORIGINS partner institutions/ relevance to other fields

Funding

Typical projects to be funded involve:

- analysis and studies of new hypotheses, innovative concepts, "proof of principle" projects
- initiation of new collaborations needing consumables, new equipment, and infrastructure
- start-up funding to produce preliminary results for bigger applications or special events
- Seed money is *not* meant to fund personnel; *only HiWi funding is possible*.

Funding ends on the accounting deadline in mid-December 2027. Funds not used by this date will go back to the ORIGINS Cluster since these funds cannot be transferred across fiscal years.

Project presentation and selection

All proposals for Seed Money projects will be presented in a selection meeting, date and venue tbd. Please nominate a proposer who can present your application in a **5-10 min presentation.** The committee will meet after all presentations and propose a distribution of the available funds.

Structure of the application

Please use one of the provided application templates or follow the structure outlined below and add one or two appropriate graphs or images.

Name of the proposer/s: [First name, last name, institution]
Name of PI(s) if different from above [First name, last name, institution]
Title of the project: [title, max. 100 characters]
Research Unit(s): [at least one of the Cluster's research units]
Category: [theory/experiment/interdisciplinary]
Funding of: [consumables/investment/personnel/workshop]
Involvement of other institutions or infrastructure:
[e. g. TUM, LMU, MPI, ESO, LRZ, ODSL, C2PAP, IDSL,…]
Time scale of the project: [start DD/MM/YYYY; end DD/MM/YYYY]
Requested Budget: [Cost plan: break down and total sum incl. VAT]
Short summary of the project: [max. 1000 characters incl. blanks]
Scientific plan:

- Preliminary work in the field
- Detailed description of the project: methods, goals and important milestones
- Seed aspect of the project and possible continuation after initial Cluster-funding
- Timeliness, challenge and attractiveness
- Feasibility, risk of the project and expected results
- Research plan for the continuation of the project in case of success
- Which groups (local as well as external) will be involved?
- Added value

Applications should be sent to Odele Straub (odele.straub@origins-cluster.de) by 01 November 2026.
Interdisciplinary and cross-institutional projects are encouraged and will be given priority.