Call for Joint PhD Projects with paired Seed Funding
The University of Melbourne and Shanghai Jiao Tong University 2021/2022

Deadline: 30 August 2021

PURPOSE OF THE SCHEME

The University of Melbourne (UoM) and Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU) seek to support research collaboration and the development of globally-engaged researchers through joint research training. Following the SJTU – Melbourne International Research Group (IRTG) inaugural call, UoM and SJTU funded 20 joint candidates across 10 projects.

In 2021, UoM and SJTU are calling for joint PhD proposals from all research areas to establish up to 10 joint graduate research projects across five separate pairs of Primary Investigators (PIs), expanding the SJTU – Melbourne IRTG. Each of these five PI pairs will receive seed funding and access funding for two joint PhD candidates, including tuition fee waivers, a full living allowance, health insurance and relocation support.

Joint PhD candidates are enrolled at both institutions under joint supervision, with one primary supervisor from UoM and one from SJTU; providing opportunities for PIs to expand their collaborative activities. The work will be judged according to the academic standards of both institutions. Upon successful completion, each candidate will be eligible to receive a PhD, recognised by two testamurs, one from UoM and one from SJTU. Both testamurs will state the joint nature of the award and the name of the partner institution.

All candidates must meet the minimum eligibility requirements to successfully enrol in the relevant PhD course at both Universities.

The joint PhD candidates recruited to the successful projects will join the SJTU – Melbourne IRTG, gaining:

- Access to expertise, resources and world-class training at UoM and SJTU, spending at least 12 months of their candidature at each institution;
- Complimentary skills from their respective hosts that will increase the impact of their research; and
- A global perspective via involvement in the SJTU - Melbourne research network.

These awards will also include seed funding for the PIs to provide initial support for development of high-quality research projects with other members of the research group in areas of mutual strength and shared interest. Funding is available at both institutions for PIs to undertake short-term visits to initiate, deepen and extend collaborative research links and enable investigators to make future joint external funding proposals that will support the next phase of their project.

Project proposals are open to all research areas, with preference given to the following priority research areas:

- Environment and Climate Change
- Governance and Institutions
- Health and Wellbeing
- Engineering and Natural Sciences

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The supervisory team must comprise of at least two Principal Investigators (PIs), one who must be employed by SJTU and one who must be employed by UoM. The PIs must have capacity to be the primary supervisor for two jointly enrolled PhD candidates.

UoM academics must be registered to supervise as per the [Supervisor Eligibility and Registration Policy](#). Primary supervisors should be employed at UoM beyond the envisaged submission date of their PhD candidates (2026). If their employment contract does not extend beyond the candidates' submission date, then alternative arrangements must be in place, by either having:

a) a named co-supervisor employed at UoM beyond the envisaged submission date of their PhD candidates (2026); *or*
b) a letter of support from the respective Head of Department/Head of School detailing the arrangements in place to ensure continuity of supervision.

For more information, including forms for supervisor registration, please consult the [information for supervisors on the Graduate Research Hub](#).

Honorary employees whose primary academic affiliation is with UoM are eligible to lead an application as a PI if they are a registered Principal Supervisor at UoM, and either:

a) their primary employer has entered into a written agreement for this call to fund the Melbourne cash component of the collaborative activity; *or*
b) they participate at their own expense if they are otherwise unaffiliated (for example, they hold an emeritus position).

SJTU academics must be eligible for supervising Ph.D. candidates and follow the university and relevant school/college's policy of graduate student recruitment. For more information, please consult the [Graduate School](#).

Previous recipients may not currently reapply to the scheme but may participate as a co-investigator.

Additional colleagues (including other partners in Australia, China or internationally) are not eligible to apply as PIs or primary supervisors, although they can participate in co-supervision of the PhD candidates as part of a joint application by SJTU and UoM PIs.

PIs must be able to demonstrate existing research relationships and must provide evidence of such collaborative relationships as part of their proposal.

Adherence to respective equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policies are a core feature of this program to ensure that all participants can do their best work, thrive and succeed. Applicant teams should consider how they can take meaningful steps in their future collaborations to foster an environment that values, supports and respects a diverse range of views, knowledge and experiences. Applicants should consider EDI as it applies to gender, Indigenous peoples, disabilities, career stages and sectors.

Applications that do not satisfy these criteria will **not be eligible**.

FUNDING FOR PROJECTS

(i)   Joint PhD scholarships package:

Each successful application will receive funding for two joint PhD candidates – one with UoM as the **Home** institution, and one with SJTU as the **Home** institution. The **Home** institution is where the candidate will spend most of their research time and likely commence/conclude their degree.

The **Home** institution will fund 1.5-2.5 years of candidature and the **Host** institution will fund 1-2 years candidature.

The maximum is **4 years of total funding.**

All candidates recruited to the program will receive tuition fee waivers, a living allowance, health insurance and relocation support.

For UoM, all candidates will receive a [Graduate Research Scholarship](#) for the time they are at Melbourne.

For SJTU, all scholarships in this call will be funded according to SJTU policies for the time they are at SJTU. For more details, please inquire with the [Graduate School](#).

A suggested timeline for projects is below. This can be altered depending on project needs, but each candidate must spend at least 12 months at each institution during their candidature.

UoM Home Institution	**SJTU Home Institution**
12 months Melbourne	12 months SJTU
12-18 months SJTU (maximum 24 months)	12-18 months Melbourne (maximum 24 months)
12-18 months Melbourne	12-18 months SJTU

__Note:__ PhD candidates whose Home Institution is SJTU will be required to complete mandatory coursework requirements. This will be completed at the beginning of their candidature at SJTU before enrolling at Melbourne and commencing work on their research project.

(ii)   Seed funds:

Each PI pair will also receive seed funds (20,000 AUD provided by UoM to the UoM PI and 85,000 RMB from SJTU to the SJTU PI). These funds can be used for affiliated research travel, expenses in hosting workshops for collaborative activities and for program coordination.

UoM seed funds will be available during the full length of candidature (3-4 years) of the PhD candidate. SJTU seed funds must be used within 24 months of allocation.

Note: SJTU will also provide up to 15,000 RMB additional support to cover round-trip airfare and travel insurance for Melbourne-based candidates to travel to SJTU. UoM will support SJTU-based candidates' relocation to Melbourne through their scholarship (up to $3,000 AUD).

It is up to the partners involved in the individual projects to cover any consumable costs.

(iii)   Funding summary:

An overall summary of funding per project is below.

University of Melbourne	**Shanghai Jiao Tong University**
Seed Funding to UoM supervisors for relevant activities: $20,000 AUD	Seed funding to SJTU supervisors for relevant activities: 85,000 RMB
Tax-free scholarship (stipend) for two joint PhD candidates when at Melbourne: [Graduate Research Scholarship](#)	SJTU scholarship (stipend) for two joint PhD candidates when at SJTU (please inquire with the [Graduate School](#))
Tuition-fee waivers (covered by Graduate Research Scholarship) for two joint PhD candidates	Tuition fee waivers (covered by SJTU scholarship) for two joint PhD candidates
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) Single Membership for international students who require a student visa to study in Australia, when in Australia	Health Insurance for two joint PhD candidates when in China
Relocation allowance to come to Melbourne for two joint PhD candidates: $2000 AUD for students moving from States or Territories other than Victoria or $3000 AUD for students moving from outside Australia	Relocation allowance to come to SJTU for Melbourne-based candidates: Round-trip ticket fare and travel insurance of up to 15,000RMB
Travel insurance while on Study Away for two joint PhD candidates	

PROJECT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Before preparing a proposal, please note the following:
- Up to 5 applications will be successful as part of this call, meaning up to 10 projects will be supported (2 per application). Projects should be co-designed by the participating PIs.
- Each pair of PIs should propose two projects, with no interdependence between them. The projects can be on a similar research topic or theme, but the candidates cannot rely on each other's results or completed thesis work to progress in their own candidature.
- Each successful proposal will receive funding for two joint PhD candidates, one with SJTU as the Home institution, and the second with UoM as the home institution. The periods spent at each institution should be decided by PIs from both sides, but at least 12-24 months should be spent at the Host institution.
- PIs should ensure that they have capacity to take on a new PhD student in line with their institution's policies and meet the eligibility requirements to participate in the scheme.
- Joint PhD projects should be designed to be completed in 3.5 years, with potential for the PhD candidate to extend their maximum candidature to 4 years.
- Candidates recruited for the successful projects will be required to commence their PhD degree in 2022.

Proposals should include:
- PI details, including:
    o The names of the PIs proposing the two projects. If relevant, their associated research groups should also be stated.
    o Evidence of previous collaboration.
    o Links to the websites of both PIs.
- CVs for investigators. This includes the PIs from both institutions and all who are listed on the project team. Each CV should be no more than **2** pages in length and include an overview of the current position and employment history, 10 career-best publications, awards and relevant presentations, and current grant income.
- The investigators' supervision history of graduate research candidates, noting timely completions and previous supervision of any international candidates.
- A brief description of the two PhD projects:
    o Noting which University will be the home institution for the project.
    o Providing an indicative plan for where and when the different parts of the research will take place at each institution.
- A brief description of the proposed activities using the supporting seed funds, including a rationale, budget, and timeline. Examples of these activities include joint workshops or symposia and visits to the partner institution to carry out research.
- A response to the selection criteria, as outlined in the "Evaluation of Project Proposals" section of the guidelines.
- Evidence of approval from the relevant School or Department at **both** institutions. This should include a plan as to how individual Faculty course requirements will be managed (as required). UoM PIs will also need to obtain approval from their Faculty's Associate Dean (Graduate Research).

It is recommended that applications are written in lay terms for reviewers to better understand the project's potential impact and its anticipated outcomes.

EVALUATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

UoM and SJTU will rank the proposals against the selection criteria and agree on the top-ranking projects to award funding. The selection criteria are as follows:
- **Collaborator complementarity** – What is the evidence of an existing research relationship or added value of a new collaboration? How does the collaboration combine mutual areas of interest and strength?
- **Quality of supervision** – Do the PIs have a track record of supervising PhD candidates to completion? Do the PIs have experience of co-supervising PhD candidates internationally? How will the PIs work together effectively in jointly supervising their shared PhD candidates? What are the beneficial learning outcomes and experiences for the joint PhD candidates?

- **Project design and rationale** – How clearly presented and justified is the basis for, and design of, the joint PhD project? What are the anticipated benefits of involving joint PhD researchers in the collaboration? What is the benefit of the candidate spending a minimum of 12 months at each institution?
- **Potential impact** – What is the level of originality and innovation in the research proposal? To what extent does the research proposal plan to address significant challenges and what is the anticipated benefit to local or international communities?
- **Capacity for expanded collaboration** – What is the extent of the planned collaboration between the PIs beyond joint supervision? How well does the proposal plan to leverage external funding? To what extent are future collaborations made possible as a result of the proposed activities? How could this project seed the development of a larger network of researchers?

REPORTING AND OTHER CONDITIONS

UoM recipients will be required to provide regular updates on project progress during the candidature of their joint PhD candidates. These updates will be requested quarterly by the International Research Training Group (IRTG) Academic Lead. Recipients who fail to participate in regular reporting mechanisms for this IRTG may be found ineligible for participation in future Researcher Development Schemes.

KEY DATES FOR 2021

- Call for proposals opens: 12 July 2021
- Call for proposals closes: 30 August 2021
- Outcomes released and projects advertised for candidate recruitment: October 2021
- Candidates to commence: 2022
- Seed funding to commence: June 2022

Please note that successful PIs **must** recruit at least one of their two candidates by **31 May 2022.** If the PIs do not meet this recruitment deadline, the **scholarships, seed and mobility funding will be recalled** for use in a future call. If PIs have only recruited one candidate by 31 May 2022, they must demonstrate their plans to recruit a second candidate to commence before the end of 2022 to retain their scholarships, seed and mobility funding.

Successful projects will be published on the UoM and SJTU websites during the recruitment rounds so that candidates can apply for specific projects.

Members of the two universities can still seek to recruit jointly awarded Ph.D. candidates, even if their application is unsuccessful, provided their nominated candidates meet the admission requirements of both institutions. Policies for recruitment, admission and candidate management for jointly awarded PhDs will be published on the website for each university. For SJTU, it is the Graduate School's website. For UoM, details are on the joint PhDs page.

SUBMISSION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

A single, jointly prepared application must be submitted in English through SJTU's online platform. Please note that this hyperlink can only be accessed by PIs from SJTU using their jAccount to create and submit the joint application, so collaboration on the application contents must be done offline. A template of the Application Form is attached for reference.

Evidence of approval from the relevant School/Department, from both institutions, needs to be uploaded as part of the submission. UoM PIs will also need to obtain approval from their Faculty's Associate Dean (Graduate Research). Please refer to the project guidelines (above) when compiling the application contents.

Applications are due by **17:00 (CST**) on **30 August 2021**.

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Submission and SJTU contact details

For more information on the joint PhD program, please consult:

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For more information on joint seed funding and application submission, please consult:

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