

Call for Project Proposals

Research Hub “Transforming Infrastructures for Sustainable Cities”

Who can apply?

Are you a Utrecht University researcher involved in research on urban sustainability transformations, who is looking for initial funding in order to collaborate with researchers from other disciplines and faculties? Do you need financial support to realise larger research applications in this field or to organise innovative workshops? Do you want to initiate collaborations with agents of change and contribute to sustainability transformations of cities or their infrastructures? Or do you have an innovative idea to improve our transdisciplinary practices regarding cities or urban infrastructures of tomorrow? Then this seed funding might be suited for you!

With the seed money fund, the research hub “[Transforming Infrastructures for Sustainable Cities](#)” intends to broaden its scope beyond its core project on urban infrastructures to stimulate new research ideas on transformations to sustainable cities. While infrastructures continue to form the key focus in this programme as they are crucial to urban sustainability, the hub’s ambition with this call is to support new internal and external collaborations, bring together researchers across Utrecht University’s faculties and to foster new ways of research impact around urban sustainability transformations. By connecting our knowledge and collaborating with stakeholders in transdisciplinary settings, the hub aims to explore and provide sustainable solutions for cities. Our ambition is to investigate and test practices of change management that help stimulate and accelerate urban sustainability transformations.

Background

Within Utrecht University’s strategic theme “[Pathways to Sustainability](#)” an interdisciplinary team of researchers has developed the challenging research hub “[Transforming Infrastructures for Sustainable Cities](#)”. In this programme, faculty members from different disciplines, together with local, national and international stakeholders, have developed a platform for new transdisciplinary collaborations on urban sustainability transformations. It is the ambition of the hub to become an open platform that stimulates innovative ideas, fosters novel collaborations across disciplines and beyond the confines of the university and sparks critical thinking and imagination on cities and urban infrastructures of the future.

More specifically, it is the hub’s ambition to broaden our transformational knowledge on urban change to open up multiple pathways to urban sustainability. The hub explores such pathways in both a local and a global perspective: we are interested in sustainability transformations in Dutch cities but also in cities around the world. Our key ambition is to strengthen our academic understanding of urban transformations for sustainable futures and use this knowledge to make concrete contributions to urban change management.

Requirements

We invite applications from members of Utrecht University for seed funding projects that reflect an innovative approach in exploring urban and/or infrastructural sustainability transformations. More specifically, we offer seed funding for activities that:

- * aim to *acquire external funding* for research activities on urban and/or infrastructural sustainability transformations with the potential of substantial societal impact (e.g. research time devoted to consortium building or grant writing);
- * develop *collaborations with urban stakeholders* to tackle sustainability challenges and bring the transdisciplinary agenda of the hub and the strategic theme forward (e.g. stakeholder workshops),
- * improve or shape *conceptual or empirical perspectives* on urban and/or infrastructural transformations with the potential of theoretical breakthroughs (e.g. academic workshops, major publication projects), and/or
- * develop *educational initiatives* about the city of the future that have the potential to diffuse more widely within Utrecht University's curriculum.

The proposal (with a maximum of 2 pages, excl. references and CVs) should have a well-defined focus and be explicit about which of the aims outlined above it aims to address. It should demonstrate clear deliverables and the potential to stimulate research activities beyond its funding period. We strongly encourage collaboration between different faculties and with external parties. Societal external partners can join an application, but funding cannot be granted to external personnel. The proposal briefly outlines the theme, the research questions and objectives, the researchers/stakeholders involved, the deliverables, interdisciplinarity, academic and societal relevance and budget. Please submit your proposal in the attached format (see Annex).

The maximum grant per project is € 20.000. Projects must be completed within 2020.

Assessment criteria

- * The potential contribution to strengthen the research hub's goals and profile.
- * Academic quality and innovation.
- * The potential of successfully acquiring external funding or stimulating activities beyond the seed funding.
- * Potential scientific and societal impact.
- * The extent of interfaculty, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration.
- * Track record and expertise of the applicants.

Procedure and timeline

You can apply at any time by submitting the proposal through email to the hub manager (future.cities@uu.nl)

The hub's core team will discuss the proposals and decide within three weeks.

Justification and report after the grant

At the end of the seed money grant the applicant must hand in:

- * Proof of the results (submitted proposal for an external call/workshop report, other deliverables);
- * A short, written report for the website;
- * A presentation for one of the hub's public lectures.

Questions

If you have questions about the call and the criteria, please contact the hub manager (future.cities@uu.nl).