

# Call and Guidelines for Proposals for International Project Teams (IPT)

<b>CALL IDENTIFIER:</b>	International Project Teams, Call 2025
<b>CALL OPENS:</b>	18.07.2025
<b>CALL INFO SESSION:</b>	02.10.2025
<b>CALL CLOSES:</b>	26.10.2025
<b>GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT:</b>	Beginning next year
<b>CONTACT DETAILS:</b>	ipt.igsse@tum.de

This call is addressed to all professors and postdocs at TUM. Funding is provided for consistently interdisciplinary collaborations with EuroTech universities, Ukrainian universities, Kwame University, Politecnico di Milano, and Universidade Estadual Paulista. At the core of this program is the training of doctoral researchers who are part of the project teams.

## 1. Mission of the IGSSE IPT call

The TUM International Graduate School of Science and Engineering (IGSSE) acts as a hub for innovative research across all TUM Schools and their research partners. A comprehensive doctoral training program fosters international and intersectoral orientation as well as career and personal development. The program **International Project Teams (IPT)** is a funding scheme for interdisciplinary doctoral training in high-level research with TUM partners across the globe.

## 2. Focus and eligibility

### 2.1. Focus universities

Proposals are eligible if the co-applicant is from one of these **focus universities**:

- partner universities in the EuroTech Universities Alliance, i.e. Technical University of Denmark, École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, Institut Polytechnique de Paris, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology and Eindhoven University of Technology
- Ukrainian universities
- Kwame University
- Politecnico di Milano
- Universidade Estadual Paulista

## 2.2. Co-funding principle

The IPT program follows a co-funding principle of two doctoral students. One Doctoral Researcher is financed by an IGSSE funded scholarship, the second Doctoral Researcher must be financed by other means. So a basic requirement for eligibility is the **co-funding of at least one Doctoral Researcher (DR)** each by the TUM PI and the international PI. The co-funded DR should not be placed at a disadvantage compared to the scholarship holder (with respect to the duration and monthly pay).

## 2.3. Interdisciplinarity

Interdisciplinarity is mandatory. In order to create projects that benefit from a strong interdisciplinary approach we fund proposals that involve **at least two different disciplines**.

## 2.4. Eligibility of TUM PIs

Eligible TUM PIs are authorized examiners according to the TUM Regulations for the Award of Doctoral Degrees § 10. It is necessary that they have a position at TUM for the entire duration of the project. If this is not possible, a co-PI needs to be integrated to whom this applies.

# 3. International Project Teams

## 3.1. Structure

Proposals for International Project Teams are submitted jointly by a TUM PI and a PI from an international partner from strategically selected partner universities (see section 2), together with the designated Coordinating Early Career Scientist (with completed doctoral degree). One half of the project is provided and funded by the external partner institution.

On the **TUM side**, the International Project Teams consist of:

- (at least) one PI at TUM
- one Coordinating Early Career Scientist (CECS)
- (at least) two DRs: one funded by IGSSE and (at least) one co-funded DR, funded by the TUM PI through other sources.

On the **international partner's side**, they consist of:

- one PI from an international partner university
- at least one DR working on the project's subject affiliated with the international partner.

## 3.2. Members

### 3.2.1. Principal Investigators (PIs)

IGSSE strives to increase the diversity among the PIs. Upon approval of the proposals, PIs are in charge of selecting suitable DRs and ensuring a transparent selection process in the International Project Team ensuring diversity (e.g. internationality, gender) in the team composition. The PIs share the supervision of the DRs. **PIs do not receive direct funding through this grant.**

### 3.2.2. Coordinating Early Career Scientist

International Project Teams are led by a TUM postdoc, namely the Coordinating Early Career Scientist (CECS), who must be named in the proposal. The CECS's salary is not funded by IGSSE, but supplementary funds will be available as outlined below. The CECS is responsible for

- the collaboration within the project (regular team meetings), monitoring its progress
- the team's budget administration, the financial controlling,
- interim and final reports,
- coordination and attendance of the workshop 'Project Team Toolbox' as described in the IGSSE Qualification Program Guide (Annex 2).

### 3.2.3. Doctoral Researchers (DR)

All DRs, the IGSSE-funded and the co-funded TUM & international ones, are working in close cooperation on the research topic of the International Project Team. It is required that all DRs have their dissertation topics within the scope of the project. All doctoral theses must be elaborated on in the proposal.

Each International Project Team includes two DRs at TUM and at least one at the partner institution. These teams are based on a co-funding model for DRs:

- On the **TUM** side, for each IGSSE-funded DR, the respective TUM PI must complement the project team with one additional DR ('co-funded DR') funded through other sources. All TUM DRs working on the project have to become members of the Graduate Center IGSSE and TUM Graduate School, a change into another Graduate Center at a later stage is not possible. Completing IGSSE's qualification program is mandatory. The TUM Regulations for the Award of Doctoral Degrees as well as the TUM-GS and IGSSE statutes apply.
- On the **international** side, the partner is responsible for funding at least one DR at their institution. Ideally, they should match TUM's funding and setup, i.e. bring an equal number of DRs into the project and send them to TUM for an extended research stay abroad.

## 4. Funding

Successful applicants will receive funding in several categories (see table below):

### Doctoral Researcher (DR)

IGSSE funds one DR in each International Project Team with a monthly stipend of € 2,000 for up to four years provided that the progress of the doctoral project is positively evaluated after the first two years. The additional co-funded TUM DR (as well as the international DR) must receive their salary/scholarship through other sources organized by the TUM PI (see 2.2. Co-funding principle).

### Direct project costs

The IGSSE-funded and the co-funded DR together receive € 4,000 in total for funding direct project costs. The relevant financial regulations at TUM have to be obeyed. Direct project costs are dedicated solely to the advancement of the DRs.

### Mobility funds

Part of IGSSE's qualification program is a compulsory research stay abroad of (at least) three months duration, for all TUM doctoral researchers. The IGSSE-funded and (one) co-funded DRs in International Project Teams receive up to € 4,000 for travel and living costs abroad. Funds remaining after completion of the research stay may be used for other trips (e.g. for conferences). In addition, these DRs receive another € 5,000 each for trips including prolonged stays abroad, conferences, research visits, etc. The mobility budget may be supplemented by the direct project cost money (but not vice versa). It cannot be transferred from one DR to another.

### Student assistants

International Project Teams may request up to € 4,000 to employ student assistants. These funds cannot be used for other purposes.

### Coordinating Early Career Scientist (CECS)

The **CECS** will receive up to € 8,000 for mobility and other direct project costs. Furthermore, they may apply for participation in specific personal development or qualification measures.

International Project Teams (total funding over project lifetime €130k)					
	Scholarship 4 years	Travel	International Research Stay (min. 3 months)	Direct Project Costs	Student Assistant
Doctoral Researcher (DR1 - scholar)	€96.000	€5.000	€4.000		
Doctoral Researcher (DR2 – co funded)		€5.000	€4.000		
Project Funds				€4.000	€4.000
Coordinating Early Career Scientist (CECS)		€8.000			

Funding will have to start being used within one year of the grant approval letter, otherwise funding will lapse and the project cannot be supported. Funding can begin only after both the IGSSE-funded DR and the co-funded DR have joined IGSSE as a member, and both TUM PI and **CECS** have attended the Project Kick-Off meeting, in which necessary administrative information is given.

All funding will end five years after the issued date of the grant approval letter. The scholarship will be provided for a maximum of four years. Initially a two years scholarship contract is issued, which will be followed by another two years contract after successful midterm evaluation. All funds are administered through IGSSE and granted upon request and availability of funds. IGSSE reserves the right to alter funding schemes.

## 5. Proposals

The structure and content of the proposals are outlined in the Annex. They must be signed by the PIs and CECS. Please note the instructions on the template regarding the format of the proposal (e.g. its 10 page limit). Other things to keep in mind when writing the proposal are:

The descriptions of the thesis projects (see 6. in Annex 1) of all participating DRs, including co-funded DRs and those of the international partners, are central to the proposals. They should be supplemented by a summary of the research field and own preparatory work.

A clear concept of the **interdisciplinary collaboration** of the team and envisaged doctoral training modules are key elements in the proposal reviewing process. The proposal should also detail the anticipated **collaboration with international partner institutions** (see 3. in Annex 1) including plans for organizing the mandatory international three-month research stays abroad for all TUM DRs. Partner institutions must provide a letter confirming an understanding of these regulations together with the proposal ("Letter of Support", see 13.2. in Annex 1).

The development in Ukraine over the project lifespan is hardly predictable. If you apply together with an Ukrainian project partner, please give short information on a possible backup plan and backup partner, in case the original partnership cannot be continued (use section 3 of Proposal Template).

**In addition to the proposal**, we ask all applicants to provide (via separate email at the time of submitting the proposal) contact data (name, email, affiliation) of four individuals who are willing to act as **referees**. **Please make sure that the proposed referees have sufficient capacities available for the review.** For further details, see Annex 1 – Proposal Template. Please reach out to us in case of questions (ipt.igsse@tum.de).

## 6. Evaluation procedure

Project proposals are checked by the IGSSE management team for formal eligibility. This is followed by a two-stage evaluation process. **In Stage 1**, the IGSSE Board reviews the proposals in light of the scientific and educational objectives of IGSSE and selects proposals for Stage 2. **In Stage 2**, the Board takes a funding decision based on at least two external reviews, which will evaluate primarily scientific excellence. To this end, the Board will usually select one referee from the proposer's suggestions and identify another themselves.

## 7. Project Responsibilities

By submitting the application, the applicants commit to the following regulations:

- Before funding can begin, all TUM DRs (funded and co-funded) need to become members of IGSSE. For Membership, a registration on the List of Doctoral Candidates of TUM via the respective Degree-Awarding Institution is necessary. This requires the nostrification of the study degree, which may take time in case of foreign study degrees. In this case, upon approval by IGSSE, a registration on the preliminary list of doctoral candidates can be accepted. It is highly recommended to start the nostrification process as soon as possible.
- The TUM PIs are obliged to refer to the recruitment conditions within the framework of the IPT program (scholarship, IGSSE membership, budget, qualification program) in the recruitment process for doctoral candidates.
- In particular with regard to the fulfilment of the qualification program, the PIs are required to support their doctoral candidates in the activities required by the IGSSE.
- The submission of an interim report and presentation 24 months after the project start latest and a final report at the end of the project (templates will be provided) are mandatory.
- On IGSSE's website, short descriptions of the projects will be published. It is the responsibility of the teams to keep these updated with the technical support of the IGSSE office.
- International Project Teams shall link the IGSSE website on their website and credit IGSSE in all scientific and outreach activities resulting from IGSSE-funded research: "Supported by the TUM International Graduate School of Science and Engineering (IGSSE)".
- To expand TUM's commitment to good scientific practice, IGSSE projects are expected to uphold the DFG's FAIR principles and align with the TUM Sustainable Futures Strategy 2030. Therefore, the interim and final project reports should highlight sustainable research practices and identify areas for future improvement.

## 8. Supplements

**Annex 1 – Proposal Template | Annex 2 – Qualification Program Guide**