**School of Technology Seed Fund**

The School of Technology Seed Fund aims to further the School’s priorities of increasing research income and/or cross-department collaborative activity, by funding activities that will lead to substantial further research income, or to an equivalent substantial impact. An award could fund postdoctoral researcher time, support a workshop, or support development of a major collaborative proposal.

* **Maximum award:** £15,000
* **Applicants:** PIs in the School of Technology
* **Costs:** Direct Costs only

*In addition, the Research Strategy Office offers the following support for large grant applications:*

* [*Large Grant Contributions Fund*](https://www.research-strategy.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-funding/large-grant-support/large-grant-contributions-fund-0)*: for proposals >£5m, contribution of up to 10% of the award value*
* [*Bid Preparation Fund*](https://www.research-strategy.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-funding/large-grant-support/grant-preparation-support)*: small grants up to £10k, to fund bid development activity.*

**Seed fund purpose and aims**

All projects should provide a basis for something substantial beyond themselves. This is likely to be one or more of the following:

1. Further substantial research income to SoT. For an experienced PI this would be a high-value and/or multi-partner grant. For an early-career PI, it would be an ambitious goal appropriate to the PI’s career stage.
2. A major research initiative
3. Significant new or emerging cross-School and cross-Dept collaborative activity
4. Significant new activity in one/more of the SoT research themes: (i) Sustainable future, (ii) Health and wellbeing, (iii) Security and resilience, (iv) Increased competitiveness.

**Eligibility criteria**

1. The lead academic must:
   1. Be based in one of the Departments of the School of Technology
   2. Be a PI who is eligible to hold their own grants within their Department
   3. Have a contract running beyond the proposed end date of the funding
2. Eligible costs:
   1. Direct costs only, max. £15,000
3. The following are **not** supported by the seed fund:
   1. Buy-out of academic investigator time
   2. Stand-alone research
   3. Non-research activities (e.g. teaching, outreach, commercialisation)
   4. Proposals for the sole purpose of bridging a postdoc
   5. Proposals whose primary purpose is administrative support for bid preparation. (Apply instead to the [RSO Bid Preparation Fund](https://www.research-strategy.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-funding/application-support/bid-preparation-fund): rolling deadline; a response is normally given within 2 weeks of submission)

**Application conditions**

* Applicants must commit to submitting a substantial funding application (or equivalent follow-on appropriate to the end goal) enabled by the seed fund, within a year of the award end date.
* Fellowship applications are not excluded as a legitimate follow-on goal of a seed fund project, but the application must demonstrate clearly (i) how the application’s goal aligns with the School’s aims and fund purpose above, (ii) that the Fellowship would be held in Cambridge.
* Projects typically begin immediately and take 3-4 months. Where a delayed start or longer duration is requested, the application should indicate why this is needed.
* To avoid unnecessary precarity for researchers, funding should typically be requested for 100% of a researcher’s time. Where funding is requested for <100% of a researcher’s time, the application should indicate the scientific need for the work to be carried out part time over a longer period, and the source of funding for the remainder of the researcher’s time during this period.

**Award conditions:** (i) Funds must be spent within 12 months. (ii) Recipients must arrange a call with the Joint Schools’ Research Relations Team to discuss progress and follow-on funding applications, midway through the project. (iii) A final 1000-word report of activities and outcomes, plus a 200-word summary suitable for publication on the School website, must be submitted within 14 months of the award date. (iv) Unspent funds will be returned to the School and put towards future projects.

**Application process:** Applications will be assessed by members of the School Research Committee, with decisions made at termly Research Committee meetings. Applications can be submitted at any time; dates for the year are given below. Please email applications to [researchstrat@tech.cam.ac.uk](mailto:researchstrat@tech.cam.ac.uk).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Applications received by** | **Assessed at Research Committee meeting** | **Outcome communicated** |
| 12:00 Weds 29 Oct 2025 | Thurs 13 Nov 2025 | Fri 28 Nov 2025 |
| 12:00 Weds 28 Jan 2026 | Thurs 12 Feb 2026 | Fri 27 Feb 2026 |
| 12:00 Weds 6 May 2026 | Thurs 21 May 2026 | Fri 5 June 2026 |

**School of Technology Seed Fund Application Form**

**Applicant Details**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name |  | |
| University email |  | |
| Department (& Division, if in Engineering) |  | |
| Role |  | |
| 1. Title of proposal | | |
|  | | |
| 1. Summary of proposal (max 100 words) | | |
|  | | |
| 1. Academic leadership: why are you the right person to lead this project? (max 100 words) | | |
|  | | |
| 1. Collaborators   For each collaborator, provide (i) name & department/organisation, (ii) 1-3 sentences on their relevant background & expertise; (iii) their role on the project | | |
|  | | |
| 1. Details of the proposed work (max 500 words) | | |
| ***Include all the following:***   * *Why this work is needed; aims* * *What the work will consist of* * *Which seed fund purpose(s) does this proposal fulfil and how?* * *Intended scientific outcomes & impacts* * *Ensure each person’s contribution to the project is clear*   ***Include the following if relevant:***   * *If you are not requesting staff time as an eligible cost, state who will carry out the work* * *Projects typically begin immediately and take 3-4 months. Where a delayed start or longer duration is requested, indicate why this is needed.* * *Where funding is requested for <100% of a researcher’s time, indicate the scientific need for the work to be carried out part time over a longer period, and the source of funding for the remainder of the researcher’s time during this period.* | | |
| 1. What follow-on funding application(s), or further significant research, will be enabled by this project? How exactly will the seed-funded work contribute to this? | | |
| ***Include all the following:***   * *Which funder(s) and funding scheme(s) will you target?* * *When will you submit your application by? (Must be within 1 year of the award end date; the award end date is 12 months after the outcome is communicated.)* * *How exactly will the seed-funded work enable this/these application(s)?* | | |
| 1. Does this work align with any School of Technology Strategic Themes? If so, which ones and how? (max 100 words) (i) Sustainable future, (ii) Health and wellbeing, (iii) Security and resilience, (iv) Increased competitiveness | | |
|  | | |
| 1. Have you applied to any other sources of funding for this or related work? If so, give details | | |
|  | | |
| 1. Funding requested & budget breakdown   *Direct Costs only. Investigator costs are ineligible. You may add or delete lines as needed.* | | |
| **Type** | **Details & justification** | **Cost (GBP)** |
| Staff | *Indicate duration, FTE, grade/spine point as per* [*University salary scales*](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/pay-benefits/salary-scales) | *Include* [*on-costs*](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/Salaries/242) |
| Equipment / software |  | *Include VAT where appropriate* |
| Consumables |  | *Include VAT where appropriate* |
| Travel & subsistence |  |  |
| Other costs |  | *Include VAT where appropriate* |
| **Total** | |  |
| **Approvals** | | |
| **PI name** |  | |
| **PI signature** |  | |
| **Head of Department**  **(or delegate) name** |  | |
| **Head of Department**  **(or delegate) signature** |  | |

*Email applications to* [*researchstrat@tech.cam.ac.uk*](mailto:researchstrat@tech.cam.ac.uk)*. For deadlines see* [*https://www.tech.cam.ac.uk/school-seed-fund*](https://www.tech.cam.ac.uk/school-seed-fund)*.*