Application for a PI-line seed money grant to support innovation projects in MMM

This third round of the **MMM Seed Grants** introduces two separate lines of funding opportunities: one for MMM-PIs and one for MMM PostDocs. The present call for **MMM PI-Seed-Grant** applications aims at promoting scientific collaborations among established MMM members that substantially exceed the aims of both previous rounds. The MMM Seed Grant funding line for MMM PostDocs will be launched one month following the PI-Seed-Grant call.

PI Members of the High-Profile Area "Minds, Media, Machines" (MMM) can receive special funds for collaborative projects in a lightweight procedure. **MMM PI-Seed-Grants** aim at strengthening the ties and shared research foci between working groups within or between the research areas *Minds*, *Media* and *Machines* via new initiatives for excellent science.

MMM PI-Seed-Grants are intended for **teams of at least two AGs in MMM**. Applications from MMM teams of different disciplines are especially encouraged but not a requirement. To allow for a more substantial investment of time and resources for the creation of "Living Technology 2.0 seeds", we increase the amount of MMM Seed Grant funding to a maximum of **38.000 EUR per AG per grant**. This amount has specifically been chosen so that collaborations of two MMM PIs would already allow for sufficient funding of a Postdoc- or doctoral student-position for one year. The MMM PI-Seed-Grant thus aims to facilitate new MMM-collaborations that make an innovative and substantial contribution to the further development of our High-Profile Research Area.

Grant Criteria:

The **MMM PI-Seed-Grant** is aimed at initiatives that are designed to conduct collaborative research on Minds, Media, and Machines in the research theme of "Living Technologies 2.0". The overarching goal of collaborative proposals in this funding line should thus be related to our ongoing efforts to advance collaborative MMM-research in artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning, data science, human computer interaction, social media, and mediatisation. As per our mission statement, proposals should consider these research areas in the context of key issues related to MMM-technologies, such as the benefit and welfare of the society, taking on board aspects such as usability, privacy, security, sustainability, and lawfulness, and supporting aspects of human life ranging from the education of children to the support of the elderly.

Successful MMM PI-Seed-Grant proposals should provide a clear vision of how the proposed collaboration leads towards joint proposals and supporting structures within the context of MMM. An important criterion will therefore be the **proposed project's contribution to MMM**, and how it strengthens the basis for joint proposals targeting external funding. Please be as concrete as possible and specifically describe the project's contribution to MMM as well as the added value of the proposed collaboration, highlighting the points that may help to distinguish it from other proposals.

Furthermore, the proposed project should demonstrate **scientific excellence**, indicating a clear and convincing research plan and ambitious but realistic outcomes. The **expertise of the applicants** should demonstrate a suitable match with regards to the proposed project - however, breaking new grounds through collaboration is highly encouraged. Lastly, attention should be paid to the **adequacy of the requested funding**. If a joint PhD- or Postdoc-position is requested, applications should provide a current and realistic estimate of the expected cost with respect to the TVL-level of likely applicants (including any named candidates already employed at the University of Bremen).

Examples of possible cost positions in this funding period include, but are not limited to:

- Studies that aim to examine a "Living Technologies 2.0" theme with a new mix of methods
- Studies that explore research questions at the intersection of two or more AGs, and thus build bridges within MMM
- Funding of materials or small equipment[1] required to study relevant aspects of human-machine interaction
- Funding for data collection / annotation student hours to pursue a new research angle within the scope of "Living Technologies 2.0"
- Conference attendance to present project results
- *New:* Costs for temporary scientific staff, up to a 100% a PhD- or Postdoc-position[2]

Financial support for other types of collaborative research initiatives is possible, provided that it supports a collaboration between different MMM member groups. Collaboration with MMM-external partners is possible. However, these partners will not be eligible to received funding via the MMM PI-Seed Grant. While we expect most projects to be conducted by two AGs in MMM, collaborations between three or more AGs are possible. Such larger collaborations will increase the overall maximum amount of funding for the entire project (e.g., a Post-Doc plus substantial additional other costs). However, the expected outcome of such collaborations should likewise be substantially higher. **We encourage potential applicants to contact us either via email at kuester@uni-bremen.de or by phone (0421 218-64266) to discuss the possibilities.**

Funding Conditions:
The funding decisions for all applications will be made by the members of the MMM Executive Board. Based on the decisions, applicants will receive a decision letter addressing the above-stated **grant criteria (contribution to MMM, scientific excellence of the proposed project, expertise of the applicants with regards to the proposed project, adequacy of the requested funding).** For negative decisions (no funding recommendation), feedback will be provided on suggestions and improvements to be made for a potential future resubmission. For administrative and legal reasons, all expenses made by projects that are funded via the MMM-PI Seed Grants will need to be executed through the MMM Office.

Funding via the MMM-PI Seed Grants is available for activities that can be **concluded within twelve months**, including a possible temporary position for a PhD- or Postdoc-position. MMM Seed-Money grants are subject to the same basic rules as any other funding provided via the city state of Bremen[3] ("Landesmittel"). Part-funding is possible in all cases. PI-members of MMM are eligible to apply for MMM PI-Seed-Grants provided that the collaboration involves at least two AGs in MMM. Third round grant money cannot be used to top-up a granted seed money proposal from former calls / rounds. However, AGs from the previous rounds of the MMM Seed-Grant series may apply for new projects involving new collaborations in MMM.

A brief final report must be submitted no later than 4 weeks after the end of the project (ca. 3-5 pages).

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1 Equipment costs should not exceed 2.500€ per AG. Ideally, this equipment is aimed for use in further collaborative work in MMM beyond the scope of the proposed project.

2 Certain conditions apply. E.g., please ensure that minimum contract duration criteria are met, and that the person(s) intended for this position are eligible. MMM, as an entity, does not (and cannot) take legal and / or administrative responsibility for such positions.

3 Grants are subject to the general rules of the University of Bremen for SAP-purchases and "Landesmittel".

Application Guidelines:

Applications for the MMM PI-Seed Grant can be submitted via E-MAIL to mmm@uni-bremen.de. **The deadline is October 15th 2021.** Please use the **Application Form** below. The application should not exceed five pages, using a font size of 10 pts, plus up to 1 page for references.

Title	[Title]
List of all applicants*	[name], [name], [name]
Estimated start	[DD.MM.YYYY]
Estimated end	[DD.MM.YYYY]

1. Summary (max. 250 words)

[Pitch of the project idea, expected results, and how it relates to the mission of "Living Technologies 2.0".]

2. Project Proposal

[Text.]

2.1. Background and research questions

[This section should provide a brief statement about the background and State of Art, followed by the main research question(s) to be addressed. Relevant own previous work should be included where suitable but is not as critical as in other types of proposals due to the aim of facilitating new initiatives for collaborations in MMM.]

2.2. Relevance, Objectives, and Expected Results

[This section should detail the expected outcomes of the proposed project. Explain how your work is relevant to the mission of "Living Technologies 2.0", which MMM cross-cutting issues are addressed, and what your objectives are with respect to leveraging the project results for future work / proposals.]

2.3. Methods

[Detail the methods of the proposed work, considering the methodological benefits of conducting this work collaboratively in MMM.]

2.4. Workplan and Timeline

[Depending on the complexity of the proposed work, consider including a Gantt chart.]

2.5. Resource Plan

[Brief summary of the individual items.]

Nr.	Requested item	Cost [EUR]
1		
2		
Total amount		

* if a currency conversion is required, please use http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/ and indicate the date of the conversion.

References

[References should adhere to the APA reference style (7th Edition).]

3. Statement [*may use digital signatures*]

The applicant(s) has (have) no other financial resources available or requested for the activity.

_____ _____ _____
Date, Signature   Date, Signature   Date, Signature