

## Impulse Seed-Grants: Support for new joint research initiatives in MMM

The present call for **MMM Impulse Seed-Grant** applications aims to support new collaborations between MMM-AGs for specific research ideas in a lightweight procedure. The intended outcome of this measure are **joint publications** that further strengthen the ties and shared research foci between working groups of the *Minds, Media and Machines* High Profile Area. Where our *Investigator Seed-Grants* are aimed to support concrete plans for joint third-party project proposals, *Impulse Seed-Grants* focus on the potential of smaller preparatory projects between partners who are **working together for the first time** to define the basis for a larger joint project. MMM Impulse Seed-Grants are intended to be **led by teams from at least two MMM AGs** who will conduct excellent research to define an ambitious new line of joint research. Applications from MMM teams of different disciplines are especially encouraged but not a requirement. The maximum amount of this Impulse funding will be **10.000 EUR per AG per grant**.

### Grant Criteria:

The **MMM Investigator Seed-Grant** is aimed at initiatives that are designed to conduct collaborative research on Minds, Media, and Machines. The overarching goal of all MMM collaborative proposals is to “seed” new collaborative third-party funded MMM-research in artificial intelligence, robotics, technical cognitive systems, 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.

For this lightweight funding line, “seed”, means that the members of an MMM Seed-Grant explicitly commit to work on establishing a line of joint publications, which should **extend also beyond the seed-funding**. The Seed-Grant application should outline how the **planned research outputs** will prepare the basis for a continued collaboration, and how this novel joint work will be further developed beyond the limits of the “impulse” funding. It is expected that the working groups will commit significant own resources and time to help ensure the long-term success of this new endeavour. The Seed-Grant application should outline how the **planned research outputs** will support this aim, and what additional steps are planned by the involved AGs to **advance their collaboration towards submission of a joint third-party funding proposal** (e.g., with the DFG). Proposals should define the project’s **impact** and highlight how it will contribute added value to MMM that would not be created otherwise. The **time commitments of MMM-members** should be explicitly stated, as well as which other team-members are expected to be involved (e.g., post-docs). Any publications produced by the collaboration should include a funding note for the MMM Seed-Grant funding. Additionally, applications should outline the project’s wider contribution to the MMM ecosystem, highlighting any points that may help to distinguish it from other proposals.

The proposed project should demonstrate **scientific excellence** and describe how the current individual **expertise of the applicants** will be linked through the expected research outputs to prepare a strong proposal for third-party funding. The research plan and should describe realistic outcomes, and how they will be leveraged. The **involvement of new AGs**, who have not previously benefited from MMM Seed-Grant funding, will be positively considered. Already previously funded AGs should include a brief separate statement on their contributions and any updates to **outcomes of from previous MMM funding** that has not already been reported. Lastly, attention should be paid to the **adequacy of the requested funding**, considering the competitive nature and limited overall budget for these proposals.

**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. E.g., they could explore research questions at the intersection of two or more AGs, or sustainability in MMM research;
- Funding for data collection / annotation student hours to pursue a new research angle within the scope of “Living Technologies 2.0”;
- Funding of materials or small equipment required for the seed work and third-party funding proposal<sup>1</sup>;
- Conference attendance to present joint project results.

Financial support for other types of costs is possible if they directly support the seed project. Collaboration with MMM-external partners is possible. However, these partners will not be eligible to receive funding via the MMM Investigator 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. 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](mailto: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. For administrative and legal reasons, all expenses made by projects that are funded via the MMM Investigator Seed Grants will need to be executed through the MMM Office.

Funding via the MMM Investigator Seed Grants is available for **activities that can be concluded within twelve months**. Projects should start, for all involved AGs, **within 6 months of the date of approval**. They should then be completed within 12 months from the start of the funding – as indicated by the first costs being booked on the project (e.g., start of the first contract). Project funding will end by **December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 (end of APF-funding)**.

MMM Seed grants are subject to the same basic rules as any other funding provided via the city state of Bremen<sup>2</sup> (“Landesmittel”). Both **PI- and Associate Investigator members of MMM are eligible** to apply for MMM Investigator Seed-Grants provided that the collaboration involves at least two AGs in MMM. **PostDocs**, i.e., post-doctoral researchers working in at least one of the AGs belonging to the High-Profile Area “Minds, Media, Machines”, can **participate as Co-Investigators** in these joint projects. Funding for a new project 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.

#### **Reporting Requirements:**

Applications are required to provide a publication plan and an outline for the targeted third-party proposal preparation and submission. A **final report** must be submitted **no later than 4 weeks after the end of the project** (ca. 2-3 pages).

Applicants further agree to support seed-grant related MMM-activities and updates. These include:

- A brief report at MMM-meetings (general assembly, retreat)
- A notice on seed-grant based manuscript submissions and grant submissions ([mmm@uni-bremen.de](mailto:mmm@uni-bremen.de))
- Manuscript submissions should include a brief **funding note** (equivalent to DFG/BMBF).

---

<sup>1</sup> Equipment costs should not exceed **2000€** per AG

<sup>2</sup> Grants are subject to the general rules of the University of Bremen for SAP-purchases and “Landesmittel”.

## Application Guidelines:

Applications for the MMM Investigator Seed Grant can be submitted via [E-MAIL](mailto:mmm@uni-bremen.de) to [mmm@uni-bremen.de](mailto:mmm@uni-bremen.de). Applications for this funding period will start in April 2024. **There will be a rolling deadline.** The available funding will be allocated based on the date of submission. 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.

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

*[The timeline should include target dates and suggested outlets of planned publications as well as a preliminary timeline for the planned third-party proposal preparation. 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		
<b>Total amount</b>		

\* 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 (7<sup>th</sup> 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