

SJTU-Warwick Joint Seed Fund Guidelines 2026/27 – Round 7

PURPOSE OF THE SCHEME

The purpose of the seed fund is to establish joint research collaboration leading to long term collaboration beyond the scope of the seed fund project. The fund aims to foster new initiatives with high potential for global impact and towards novel research outcomes.

The collaboration is intended to include and lead to:

- At least 2 reciprocal visits for staff and/or research students, (i.e. at least one visit by Warwick staff and/or research students to SJTU and one by SJTU staff and/or research students to Warwick) (to be conducted within the duration of the award);
- The submission of at least one joint co-authored publication (or equivalent output);
- Targeting a suitable scheme for the submission of a joint application for external funding.

FIELDS TO BE SUPPORTED IN 2026

The Joint Seed Fund will provide a competitive internal mechanism to support research cooperation. The call is open to Principal Investigators (PIs) from all departments, without restriction to specific fields of study. We encourage interdisciplinary proposals and welcome applications from diverse academic disciplines.

FUNDING

Funding will be provided jointly by Warwick and SJTU and will be comprised of **5,000 GBP** from Warwick to the Warwick academic and **50,000 RMB** from SJTU to the SJTU academic.

Funding will be provided for projects lasting no longer than 12 months and will be available for projects starting on **1st August 2026** and completing no later than the financial year end of each institution.

At Warwick, all costs should be incurred before **31st July 2027**. Funds cannot be carried over from one financial year into another and any unspent funds will no longer be available to award holders.

A project report is to be submitted within one month from the end of the initiative or funding period and will be reported to the joint Chairs of the selection panel for the fund. Additionally, SJTU and Warwick request follow-up reports for up to three (3) years after the project's completion to assess the longer-term impact of the funding. Templates for reports will be provided. Grants should be spent within the period indicated.

Each institution will provide funds to its own faculty members.

Eligibility Criteria

- A minimum of one staff member from each university per application is required.
- Principal Applicants on each side must be permanent or fixed-term academic staff of SJTU or Warwick. For fixed-term staff, the duration of their contract must extend beyond the end date of the funded project to ensure continuity and successful completion. Adjunct/Honorary staff members whose home university is neither SJTU nor Warwick are not eligible to be lead-investigators but can be listed as further co-investigators.
- Applications may typically include not more than one Visiting/Third-party Fellows (per proposal) whose home university is neither SJTU nor Warwick; they will not be considered as an applicant.
- Each initiative will normally be eligible for only one round of seed funding.

- Activities already fully funded via other sources are not eligible for support.
- Applicants will be required to engage with dissemination of the outcomes of their initiative, including presenting at a colloquium or other event organised by SJTU and/or Warwick following the completion of the initiative, as required.
- Applicants must have met in full the conditions and requirements of any internal seed funding previously awarded to them by either university, including final project reports.

FUNDING EXPENDITURE

Typical activities supported by the fund will include:

- Initial planning meetings, network building and workshop activities;
- Pilot research studies/fieldwork where this is important to enable a subsequent funding application and/or engagement with external parties such as government;
- Visiting/Third-party Fellows (not SJTU or Warwick staff).
- Postgraduate students attending academic conferences and research internships.

Eligible expenses may include:

- Reasonable travel and visa costs;
- Accommodation;
- Reasonable event/workshop costs;
- Research support;
- Reasonable support towards the cost of participation by relevant third parties, where this would add significant value or potential to a project.

Items not eligible for funding:

- Infrastructure and equipment;
- Overhead/central support charges;
- Salaries and honoraria;
- Per diems (expenses must be based on receipts);
- Car hire;
- Conference registrations for staff members;
- Travel/accommodation costs related to non-SJTU/Warwick events;
- Intercontinental travel for non-SJTU/Warwick participants;
- Website development (except where this will provide a direct platform for research collaboration);
- Scholarships or course fees for students;
- Costs of initiatives undertaken between the professional services of both universities;
- Costs already committed or incurred prior to submission of the proposal.

APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Teams of researchers with one lead researcher from each institution should submit a **single**, bilingual application form to SJTU's online application portal (link: <https://wj.sjtu.edu.cn/q/FK9um4au>) by **Wednesday 15th April 2026, 16:59 UK time/15th April 2026, 23:59 Beijing time**.

Warwick lead investigators will also be required to complete and submit, at the same time as their application, the Warwick Requirements Form which includes a detailed budget breakdown and ethics check.

SJTU: global.sjtu.edu.cn

Warwick: warwick.ac.uk/sjtu

Selection criteria:

- Technical merit: i.e. the importance/novelty of the project within its field or in terms of the challenges it seeks to address.
- Strategic merit/alignment: the selection committee will be guided by these considerations -
 - How the project advances the interests of both institutions;
 - A clear case of complementarity/synergy between the proposed applicants (the whole project outcomes being greater than the sum of its parts);
 - Funding potential (the ability to produce a convincing roadmap for future funding)
 - Potential for the project to include relevant third parties (e.g. commercial, governmental and non-governmental organisations) for greater impact.
- Joint capacity: i.e. the standing and track record of the academics involved, and the evidence of their shared commitment to achieving the aims of the project.

SUBMISSION

The lead investigators from Warwick and SJTU need to work together to prepare a **single**, bilingual application. The application needs to be submitted to only SJTU using their online application portal (link: <https://wj.sjtu.edu.cn/q/FK9um4au>). **Please note that this page can only be accessed by the SJTU lead investigator with a jAccount.** A template of the Application Form is attached for reference and should be submitted along with the Warwick Requirements Form. Warwick lead investigators are required to submit a detailed budget breakdown of how funding will be used.

KEY DATES

Applications open: Monday 16 March 2026

Applications close: Wednesday 15 April 2026, 4:59 pm UK time

Communication of results to applicants: w/c 29 June 2026

Awards begin: 1 August 2026

Awards finish: 31 July 2027

QUERIES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Please email: isr@warwick.ac.uk (Warwick) and icae@sjtu.edu.cn (SJTU)