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IAS-Luxembourg
Funding Instrument BRAINSTORM

Call description and guidelines for applicants

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Call information and forms: https://wwwen.uni.lu/ias

Online submission tool: https://research.uni.lux

Timeline 2022 Call:

Opening of the call	Submission deadline	Selection Committee Meeting	Communication of call results	Earliest project start date
2 May 2022	15 July 2022 @2pm (CET)	29-30 Sept 2022	17 Oct 2022	1 Jan 2023

Description and application guidelines

The Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS) of the University of Luxembourg (UL) provides funding opportunities for researchers from-, or affiliated to-, the UL with the aim to elaborate bold and interdisciplinary projects at the very forefront of science and having a distinct risky and audacious character.

BRAINSTORM is one of four funding instruments of the UL's Institute for Advanced Studies, and was created to support the organisation of small-group brainstorm meetings (up to max. 15 participants, incl. PIs) on emerging research questions and topics, with the ultimate aim of formulating new project ideas, writing white papers about complex issues and presenting new opinion analysis on the studied matter, or setting up new international partnerships.

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS

- BRAINSTORM 2022 is the first call for BRAINSTORM projects within the frame of the IAS. The BRAINSTORM call is open to all disciplines and sectors and exclusively supports excellence and interdisciplinarity through dedicated small workshops.

- The **deadline** for project proposal submission is on **July 15, 2022 at 2pm (CET)**. The Research Support Department (RSD) and the Research Facilitators are the first contact in case of questions. Project submission forms and useful information are available on the IAS web pages. Enquiries can be sent to ias@uni.lu.

1. Description of the BRAINSTORM call

1.1   Introduction

The BRAINSTORM funding instrument is part of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the University of Luxembourg, and has the objective to support the organisation of small-group brainstorm meetings on emerging research questions at the forefront of knowledge. These brainstorm sessions should aim at developing excellence in specific domains or at addressing major societal challenges.

The IAS will support these small-size brainstorm meetings (minimum 5 and maximum 15 people all together incl. Coord-PIs) considered as the ideal forum for exchanges on emerging research reflexion, often covering more than one discipline or sector. These workshops, organised by a member of the UL or an IAS - Luxembourg DISTINGUISHED Visiting Fellow ([Funding Instruments (uni.lu)](#)), are expected to bring together a select group of international and UL scientists, to discuss the latest pre-publication research and innovation at the edge of the concerned field. Targeted participants include international experts, UL researchers including UL Doctoral or Post-doctoral researchers and YOUNG ACADEMICS from the IAS. Junior participants will gain new understanding of emerging fields through dialogue with more senior experts

The BRAINSTORM workshops are expected to lead to new research projects, initiatives, networks or short position/white papers published internationally, further increasing UL's visibility.

Driven by excellence and interdisciplinarity, the BRAINSTORM call is **open to all disciplines and sectors**. BRAINSTORM encourages the organization of collaborative events across UL entities and with foreign partners. These events usually last a couple of days. Funding is granted on a competitive basis and once granted, it remains valid for a period of 12 months, from Jan. 1st to Dec. 31st of a calendar year to facilitate the workshop organization (see section 4, BRAINSTORM-selection). After this period, the grant will be lost. Budget is not transferrable from one calendar year to another.

BRAINSTORM budget generally covers travel and accommodation costs for international participants in the event, as well as catering and workshop logistics, including costs related to proceedings, and Open Access publications as authoritative articles. See section 2.5 for more details on eligible costs within the BRAINSTORM call.

1.2   Eligibility for participation

BRAINSTORM events are typically initiated by 2 to 3 Principal Investigators (PI) from distinct disciplines of UL, who jointly contribute to the overall meeting organization. They ensure the interdisciplinary nature of the group of researchers and thinkers participating to the event in order to achieve the development of new project ideas or impactful white papers. The following researchers are eligible PIs for the BRAINSTORM instrument of the IAS-Luxembourg:

- Full, Associated or Assistant Professors.

- Permanent Research Scientists holding a full ADR.

Luxemburgish research partners (institutions or individuals) such as Luxembourg Institutes,

from the public or private sector and international experts (other than those for whom a travel/accommodation budget is requested in the BRAINSTORM application) may participate in BRAINSTORM events without direct financial support from UL, except the ones listed in the budget table, section 2.6.

1.3   Exclusion condition

Principal Investigators may only apply to one BRAINSTORM call per year. PIs who have been awarded a BRAINSTORM grant may apply for another IAS funding tool/mechanism/scheme, either AUDACITY, YOUNG ACADEMICS or DISTINGUISHED, without any restriction.

2. Requirements for application

2.1   Principal Investigators and coordination

The **Principal Investigators** (PIs) applying for a BRAINSTORM funding should:

- comply with the BRAINSTORM eligibility requirements (section 1.2).

- be equally responsible for the organisation of the BRAINSTORM workshop activities, while respecting high standards of ethical principles and research integrity.

- ensure the scientific quality of the event and its contribution to the main missions of the IAS-Luxembourg:
  o leverage bold and interdisciplinary research at the very forefront of science.
  o symbolize UL's values of excellence, interdisciplinarity and internationality.
  o build bridges in-between the UL community, international visitors and society.
  o contribute to attract and retain international talent.

The **coordinating PI** organises the writing and submission of the proposal, facilitates interdisciplinary approaches and coordination between the different UL entities and external partners, ensures a concise report on the event outputs and the exchange with the UL administration and governance: as such, the coordinating PI is the single point of contact for the IAS-Luxembourg and the Research Support Department. The Coordinating-PI is also the budget owner.

2.2   Specificities of the BRAINSTORM funding scheme

Duration and budget ceiling

The BRAINSTORM event usually has a maximum duration of **2 to 3 days**. Once granted, funding remains available for a period of 12 months to allow sufficient time for the organisation of the event. The event must take place **between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31 of a calendar year**.

Budget is not transferrable to the next calendar year after the event has taken place. All invoices for BRAINSTORM expenses must be submitted to SFC by the annual closing date communicated by SFC.

A BRAINSTORM grant covers funding for the organisation of BRAINSTORM sessions, room rentals, catering and the travel cost for international experts invited to the event. IAS funding granted for a BRAINSTORM event is limited to a maximum of **20 000 €**.

A justified adaptation of the duration and budget of the event is possible. In such case, UL's

Research Facilitators or UL's Research Support Department shall be contacted as early as possible during the design phase to request permission from the Vice-Rector for Research.

Multiple project submission, project resubmission and follow-up

A researcher can only participate in one single proposal per call, both as a co-PI and as a coordinating PI.

Proposals that have been submitted in previous BRAINSTORM calls and have not been retained for funding can be resubmitted **once** in subsequent calls.

Participants in the BRAINSTORM call confirm that the planned event is not funded by any other means (no additional financial support to the event from public or private organisations are allowed).

Combination of a BRAINSTORM event with other IAS funding instruments is possible.

The purpose of the BRAINSTORM events is to enable the writing of white papers, or the submission of project proposals to AUDACITY and other funding instruments available from national and international funding agencies.

2.3 Intellectual property rights (IPR) and authorship

IPR

For employees of the UL, Intellectual Property Rights (**IPR**) are subject to the UL's current policy for the valorisation of research results, as set out in the University law, the employment contract and the Guiding principles for the valorisation of research results and intellectual property rights.

Where appropriate, intellectual property rights agreements or non-disclosure agreements should be put in place with BRAINSTORM participants who are not employed by UL.

Result valorisation

The valorisation process allows the University of Luxembourg to protect, valorise and transform fundamental research results into innovative and economically viable products, processes, services or forms of technology, duly protected by intellectual property rights. According to the national law, any researcher who decides to valorise an innovative result, resulting from his/her scientific work, must declare it to his/her employer. The **Office for Partnership, Knowledge and Technology Transfer** (PaKTT Office) at UL provides support and guidance for researchers who wish to valorise innovative results. Any questions regarding intellectual property rights should be brought to the attention of the PaKTT Office (paktto@uni.lu) or support structures/officers of the relevant University entity.

Funding acknowledgement statement

Publications and any other communication materials generated by the BRAINSTORM funding instrument must acknowledge the financial support from the IAS in the following form: "*Author X acknowledges financial support of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the University of Luxembourg through a Brainstorm Grant (BRAINSTORM -Year)*".

2.4   Ethics, Gender equity, and data protection

Code of conduct, ethics and personal data

UL promotes the responsible conduct of research as described in the **University of Luxembourg - Code of Conduct[1]**, also respects the fundamental ethical principles listed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Any research involving the participation of human subjects, animals or the use of biological materials or personal data, or which may pose a risk to the environment or society, is considered to have an ethical component. Ethical components must be specifically addressed in the BRAINSTORM proposal, respecting the **ethics principles[2]** in force at UL. The following panels and contact points might be of relevance:

- Researchers <u>must consult</u> the **Ethics Review Panel** of the University of Luxembourg (ERP, erp-submissions@uni.lu) regarding the general ethical aspects of their projects before starting their research. The Ethics Review Panel may not intervene after the start of a research project phase that raises ethical questions. It may not approve research project *posteriori*! If the project involves human subjects or samples, the **Comité National d'Éthique de Recherche[3]** (CNER) and/or the **Commission Nationale de la Protection des Données[4]** (CNPD) need to extend their approval prior to the launch of the project.

- For projects dealing with personal data, the **Data Protection Officer** at UL (DPO, dpo@uni.lu) provides advice and guidance on data protection to University staff and is the contact person for the National Commission for Data Protection (CNPD). Such projects shall receive approval of the CNPD prior to the start of the project.

Gender equity

UL wishes to promote gender equity in research and academic careers. Within this general principle, the University will ensure that the College of the IAS Fellows maintains its own gender balance, receives relevant gender awareness training material and incorporates the University Gender delegate[5] as an observer in the selection process.

2.5   Doctoral Education

Doctoral and post-doctoral researchers are not eligible to apply, but are invited to participate in BRAINSTORM events. For doctoral researchers, this event can be considered as eligible for ECTS acquisition under the conditions in force in the respective doctoral schools of UL. Further information on doctoral education at UL is available under "Doctoral education[6]" and "Office of doctoral studies – BED[7]".

2.6   Eligible costs

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[1] University of Luxembourg - Code of Conduct
[2] https://wwwen.uni.lu/research/researchers_research/standards_policies
[3] www.cner.lu
[4] www.cnpd.lu
[5] https://wwwen.uni.lu/university/about_the_university/governance/gender_equality_officer
[6] https://wwwen.uni.lu/studies/doctoral_education
[7]https://wwwen.uni.lu/university/about_the_university/organisation_charts/organisation_chart_rectorate_central_administration/office_of_doctoral_studies_bed

The maximum funding of a BRAINSTORM event is **20 000 €**. Requested costs must be essential for the organisation of the event and must be detailed in the Project Budget Form (Excel table). The table below provides a summary of eligible costs, while detailed information on budget preparation is covered in section 3.5.

#	BRAINSTORM costs	Eligibility	Applicability
A	Personnel costs	NO	
B	Third party collaborator, experts, subcontracting	YES	Expert fees only.
C	Equipment	NO	
D	Travel costs	YES	Travel and accommodation costs for international invitees only. Consult the UL financial guidelines* (Travel and accommodation costs are not eligible for Luxembourgish partners)
E	Documentation	YES	Purchase of books, journals, …
F	Other costs	YES	Catering, logistics, room rentals, advertising. Open access publications.
G	Operating expenses (consumables)	NO	

*see Intranet: ULI > The University > SFC > Policies and Procedures

2.7 Contribution from other IAS funding instruments

Financial support from other IAS instruments DISTINGUISHED, YOUNG ACADEMICS and AUDACITY is considered as other source of funding that will not jeopardize the specific acquisition of BRAINSTORM funds, i.e. funding can be cumulated but must be clearly labelled.

3. Practical application to the BRAINSTORM call

3.1 Key rules

- Proposals must be written in **English**. Please refer to the application templates for further instructions.

- The Project Application Form must be accompanied by a Project Budget Form (an Excel budget table), both forms must be submitted together.

- Please use Arial, font 11, single space to complete in the application form.

- All proposals for the BRAINSTORM call must be submitted via the online submission tool (https://research.uni.lux).

- No modification after the deadline will be accepted. Incomplete proposals and those received after the deadline will not be processed. Major budgetary errors may result in the rejection of the proposal. Do not hesitate to interact with the RSD in case of doubt.

3.2 Submit the electronic Project Announcement Sheet (e-PAS)

- The e-PAS is required by the Research Support Department prior to submission in order to confirm that your BRAINSTORM application is approved by all necessary bodies in your

Faculty or Interdisciplinary Centre.

- Go to the online submission tool https://research.uni.lux and create a new **electronic Project Announcement Sheet**. For further information, please consult the instructions online.

3.3 Application process

The application process itself consists of **4 main steps.** After completing the application form (Word-file) offline, please go to the online submission tool https://research.uni.lux. The system will guide you through the application process. There you can also upload the completed application form.

Step 1: Fill in the application form (please read carefully section 3.4)

- Download the application form and the budget template (see Document Templates (uni.lu)).
- Standardize the file name:
  "UL-IAS-BRAINSTORM-2022_ProjectACRONYME_PI LastName_PI FirstName".
- In the application form, fill in the requested information (read section 3.4 carefully). Turn the completed form into a PDF-file.
- Fill in the budget template provided on Document Templates (uni.lu) (read section 3.5 carefully), as you have to enter the amounts online via the **online submission tool**, and send the budget in the Excel file to ias@uni.lu.

Step 2: Upload the application form, complete the general project information via the online submission platform

- Upload the application form as PDF-file.
- Via the online submission platform, please check and edit the general project information, the project description and the abstract retrieved from the e-PAS.

Step 3: Fill in the budget information via the online submission tool

Step 4: Invite your research facilitator/coordinator for proposal validation

- Via the online submission tool, you are required to invite your Research Facilitator/Coordinator PI to validate your proposal including the budget. They can provide detailed advice and support. Please ask for their internal deadline.

Please ensure that all items on the BRAINSTORM **Checklist** project proposal template are ticked. No submission is possible until the checklist is completed.

3.4 Application form

1. General information on the BRAINSTORM event

ACRONYM of the event, title of the event, provisional date(s), budget (maximum 20 k€).

Principal Investigators (PI)

Please fill in the requested information for the Coordinating PI and the other Co-PIs. Larger consortia may be brought to the attention of the VRR prior to submission of the application; in such cases, liaise with Research Facilitators and RSD.

2. Event description

2.1 Organization team (max. 1 page)

- List all participants of the event (name, position, institution/company).

- Describe the BRAINSTORM **organizational team** including the profile of the non-permanent staff that will be invited on the project (IAS DISTINGUISHED fellows, international experts, professors, doctoral and postdoctoral fellows), the role and intellectual contribution of Affiliated professors, if any.

2.2 Abstract (max. 0.5 page)

- Describe the main purpose of the event in a scientifically oriented abstract.

- The abstract should be concise, clear, informative and self-contained.

- As reviewers form a first impression of the project after reading the abstract, be sure to emphasise the importance and interdisciplinary character of the project.

- Please use a "lay writing style" that is aimed at an interdisciplinary audience.

3. Event description and objectives (max. 1.5 page)

BRAINSTORM events should lead to new research projects, initiatives, networks or opinion/white papers, published internationally.

In this section:

- **Description of the event:**
  - Describe the interdisciplinary / intersectoral nature and the strong originality of the research idea targeted by the BRAINSTORM workshop.
  - Explain why the interdisciplinary approach is important, i.e. the high risk, bold and unusual approach.
  - If applicable, explain how the workshop will contribute to the formulation of future projects, the creation of a research network, the generation of fundamental knowledge or the generation of a patent idea.
  - If applicable, describe the potential impact of the workshop for other disciplines and how it will benefit the wider UL community.

- **Event objectives:**
  - Clearly define the goal, objectives, focus and scope of the workshop.
  - State the main research questions and/or hypothesis that will be addressed.
  - Make your text clear and concise.

Please note, that "Interdisciplinarity" and "Excellence" are key criteria for the evaluation of the proposals. A BRAINSTORM event is a workshop bringing together PIs of different departments (Faculties) as well as research groups (Interdisciplinary Centres), and, if necessary, additional external experts to identify new research ideas that are at the forefront of science, exceptionally

good and show a willingness to take bold risks.

The IAS applies the following definition of **interdisciplinary** research: "*a mode of research by teams or individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialized knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice*[8]".

4. Research approach (max. 1 page)

- Describe how the research questions and hypotheses will be addressed.

- Detail the interdisciplinary features of the approach according to the event description in section 3 of the project proposal template.

5. Outcomes and follow-ups of the workshop (max. 1 page)

- **Contribution to advancement of knowledge and UL's research community.** Describe the workshop's contribution to the production of opinion or knowledge and the impact it will have on the UL's research community. In other words, how will the workshop contribute to either (1) the writing white or opinion papers at the forefront of knowledge, (2) the development of new project ideas for application to the AUDACITY call or other national and/or international calls, (3) the promotion of interdisciplinarity across UL and in networking, (4) the advancement of the state of the art, (5) the development of the scientific community of UL and its entities in terms of capacities, competencies, visibility and attractiveness through the interaction with international complementary experts.

- **Future research plans.** Indicate how the results of the workshop can be used as a basis for future research and what plans exist (based on the results) to apply for projects within the AUDACITY call or outside UL (national or international calls).

- **Exploitation and dissemination of workshop outcomes.** Please explain the measures that will ensure exploitation of new project ideas and outcomes after the workshop.

6. Intellectual property rights, legal and ethical requirements (max. 0.5 page)

- Address potential issues related to Intellectual Property Rights and confidentiality, in particular if an external contribution of know-how (incl. background IP) is foreseen, generating shared results with sister institutions in Luxembourg and abroad.

- Describe all potential issues concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and ethical issues (not only for activities carried out in Luxembourg). Explain how you will address these, e.g., anonymous data processing, consent forms, contracts with companies involved and specify any existing permission and/or authorisation for the proposed work. Please consult the University of Luxembourg's Policy on Ethics in Research and international codes of conduct[9].

3.5 Budget template (see the Excel budget table)

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[8] Facilitating Interdisciplinary Research, Committee on Facilitating Interdisciplinary Research, National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, Institute of Medicine, 2005
[9] Download on: http://wwwen.uni.lu/research/standards_policies and http://www.fnr.lu/guidelines

This template helps you to familiarise yourself with the required information. The costs will be entered directly via the online submission tool.

- All amounts are to be entered in euros (€) without cents.

- Budget is not transferrable from one calendar year to the next.

- For all expenses, the procedures and limits in force at the time the expenses are incurred apply. Please consult the latest financial guidelines in the Intranet[10] and your Research Facilitator.

- Major budgetary errors may result in the rejection of the proposal.

- Please consider alternative or complementary sources of funding, from IAS Luxembourg DISTINGUISHED, YOUNG ACADEMICS and AUDACITY instruments.

Budget categories:

Category A: Staff financed by the project

The BRAINSTORM instrument does **not** provide **financial support** for the hiring of new staff.

Category B: Third party collaborators

Fees for invited speakers or experts in complementary fields can be financed under BRAINSTORM (only travel under Category D) as specified in the Service Contract with scientific experts (Service contract (uni.lux)).

Category C: Durable equipment

Not eligible for BRAINSTORM funding.

Category D: Travel to and fro and accommodation in Luxembourg

Travel and accommodation costs are only eligible for international experts invited to BRAINSTORMING events.

- Each trip on behalf of the University must be undertaken in the most cost-effective manner.

- For eligible costs and applicable rates, please consult the UL financial guidelines.

Category E: Documentation

The costs of purchasing books or journals required for the event or to be shared during the event are eligible for funding under BRAINSTORM.

Category F: Other costs

Costs for article processing charges (APC) and full Open Access publications or similar fees are eligible. In this case, these publications must indicate the source of funding in the following form "*Author X acknowledges financial support of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the University of Luxembourg through a Brainstorm Grant (BRAINSTORM - Year)*".

Logistical costs related to BRAINSTORM events are eligible for funding. These include room rentals, catering, advertising costs and transport of guests (taxi, etc.).

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[10] see Intranet: ULI > The University > SFC > Policies and Procedures

Category G: Operating expenses

Not eligible for funding under BRAINSTORM.

Category R: Additional income to cover project costs

Not eligible for funding under BRAINSTORM.

4. Selection process of BRAINSTORM applications

The evaluation and selection process of BRAINSTORM proposals consist of several steps:

1. Administrative eligibility check by the RSD.

2. Applications to the BRAINSTORM scheme will be evaluated by the College of IAS Fellows. The evaluation is based on three main criteria (1) the quality and originality of the BRAINSTORM idea; (2) the outstanding profile of the participants and complementary criteria as applicable to the orientation of the proposed event; (3) the potential to lead to the writing of authoritative white papers, or to initiate unconventional research projects or new areas of research at UL through AUDACITY or other external funding (national or international) or to establish new research networks.
    Members of the College of IAS Fellows with a conflict of interest in a BRAINSTORM application are excluded from the selection process of the concerned application.

3. The College of IAS Fellows ranks the proposals on the basis of the written proposal and recommends the proposals for funding to the VRR. The selection criteria are:
    a. Academic excellence (competence of the PIs, strength of the consortium).
    b. Audacious character of the project idea (novelty, originality, and risky).
    c. Interdisciplinarity of the project consortium (internally or externally).
    d. Strength to lead to the event objectives (white paper, project proposal, network).

Each of these criteria will be evaluated on a 5-point rating scale (see evaluation template). The resulting project average will form the basis for the final discussion of the members of College of the IAS Fellows at the ranking session where the final decision on the BRAINSTORM projects will be made.

4. The College of IAS Fellows submits the selected projects to the Rector for final funding decision.

5. The decision is communicated to the applicants by the Head of the IAS.

The College of IAS Fellows is composed of all Principal Investigators of on-going AUDACITY projects. Further details on the organisational features of the IAS Luxembourg can be found in the IAS Organisation and Governance (IAS Governance (uni.lu)).