



Call for Proposals

Max Planck Institutes and Brazilian Center for Research in Energy and Materials Seed Fund Application Guidelines

1. Background

- 1.1 The Max Planck Institutes (MPI), as listed in the Annex 1, and the Brazilian Center for Research in Energy and Materials (CNPEM) have agreed on a framework for continued collaboration and investment to strengthen the strategic partnership between these institutions.
- 1.2 The partnership framework aims to deepen existing collaborations and develop broader networks of researchers, to build related research areas, expand access to specialized knowledge, facilities and scientific exchange, and reinforce strategic goals of institutional engagement.
- 1.3 To this end, the institutions have created the joint MPI-CNPEM Strategic Collaboration Seed Fund for research projects in areas such as those listed in items a to f below, to which permanent researchers from each institution are encouraged to apply.
 - a. Life Science and Medicine;
 - b. Energy;
 - c. Materials Science, including Micro and Nanofabrication;
 - d. Biodiversity;
 - e. Artificial Intelligence;
 - f. Accelerators Engineering.

2. Modalities

The MPI-CNPEM Seed Fund supports collaborative engagement between the MPIs and CNPEM with the following modalities:

- 2.1 **Initiation Grants** to encourage wider researcher involvement and expand institutional engagement.

We invite applications from colleagues interested in developing new research relationships. Priority will be given to:

- a) Applicants who can clearly demonstrate that they have established a potential area of collaboration with MPI/CNPEM counterparts;
- b) Activities with the potential to extend beyond individual links to wider – i.e., ‘research group to research group’ – collaborations;
- c) Projects with the potential for sustained and scalable collaborative activity.

- 2.2 **Implementation of grants** to support new collaborations or strengthen existing ones

between researchers, aiming to achieve clearly defined results.

Priority will be given to activities that have the potential to:

- a) Advance joint research priorities;
- b) Connect world-leading researchers;
- c) Enhance our institutional research profiles through collaborative publications;
- d) Serve as foundation for jointly submitted proposals to external funding agencies for sustained support of collaborative research activities.

3. Guidelines

3.1 There are no restrictions on the forms of activity supported by the MPI-CNPEM Seed Fund, providing they meet the criteria outlined above.

3.2 The fund is available to support planning visits, workshops and exchanges with the partner institution for the purpose of developing the strategic partnership. The fund may also support meetings in third party locations where there is potential to develop and/or showcase collaboration.

3.3 Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- a) Academic projects to expand MPI-CNPEM academic networks and research outputs, such as joint conferences, workshops, symposia, collaborative experiments and co-authored publications;
- b) Trilateral activities that link research projects to wider MPI-CNPEM strategic regions – including, for example, China, India, and countries in Africa, Latin America and Europe.

3.4 Applicants are encouraged to apply for the funding of reciprocal activities in order to broaden networks and cement engagement.

3.5 Applications that can demonstrate potential for relationships to become sustainable beyond the proposed project and initial seed funding term are strongly encouraged, whether through faculty and departmental commitment or the likelihood of securing externally leveraged grants and awards.

3.6 Project funds must be utilized within a maximum period of 24 months.

4. Financial Support

4.1 MPI seed funding will be allocated locally, with MPI paying the travel and accommodation costs of MPI staff travelling to CNPEM, and the costs of projects occurring at the partner MPI; and CNPEM paying the travel and accommodation costs of CNPEM staff travelling to the partner MPI, and the costs of projects occurring at CNPEM.

4.2 MPI-CNPEM seed funding will be subject to the travel reimbursement and other relevant financial policies of the institution providing the funding to its researcher or units.

4.3 The maximum funding available per project is up to Euro 20,000 in total, with equal contribution from each partner.

4.4 The maximum funding available per call will be Euro 100,000 in total, shared equally between both parties

5. Application Process

5.1 Applications must be submitted using the MPI-CNPEM Strategic Collaboration Seed Fund **Application Form (Annex 2)**, providing the following information:

- a) Identification of PIs at both MPI and CNPEM
- b) Purpose and timescale of visit/programme activity
- c) Summary of the collaborative research project
- d) Anticipated total cost and itemised budget for the proposed activities.
- e) Anticipated means of sustaining the collaboration, including:
 - i. funding available from other sources;
 - ii. potential for securing future external investment
- f) Complete Collaborative research project (maximum 3 pages)
- g) List of 6 (six) names of experts related to the area of the proposal, **avoiding any possible conflicts of interest**, that will be used for MPI internal assessment procedures.
- h) **Institutional support documentation:**
 - i. **For MPI applicants:** Letter of support signed by a Director of the collaborating MPI (Annex 3)/application form signed by a Director of the collaborating MPI
 - ii. **For CNPEM applicants:** Letter of support by a Director of the collaborating CNPEM facility (Annex 4), ensuring alignment with CNPEM's internal governance and procedures, as evidenced by the application submission and endorsement through the appropriate internal approval process

5.2 Applicants from each institution must present evidence of availability of matching funds from its partner institution.

5.3 The proposal must be submitted according to the deadline stated in section 7 below, both to CNPEM by its respective Principal Investigator **and** to MPI by its respective Principal Investigator.

- a) All proposals from CNPEM researchers must be submitted by email to call-maxplank@cnpem.br in a single pdf document.
- b) All proposals to MPI must also be submitted by email to latam@gv.mpg.de in a single pdf document.
- c) Submissions by any other means, or after the deadline specified in item 7 below, will not be considered.

5.4 Further information can be found by contacting Tobias Renghart/ Carolina Abadie at latam@gv.mpg.de, at the Max Planck Representation for Latin America or by contacting the Marilda Bottesi at marilda.bottesi@cnpem.br, at CNPEM.

6. Assessment and reporting

6.1 Each Party will assess proposals according to its own internal procedures. The grant review panels at MPI and CNPEM (the MPI–CNPEM Steering Group) will liaise to jointly determine which projects will receive funding.

6.2 Proposals that do not comply with the terms of this Call for Proposals will not be considered for review.

- 6.3 Grant recipients will be required to submit a project report outlining the activities undertaken with the support of the award.
- 6.4 Recipients may also be asked to present their outcomes to the MPI–CNPEM Steering Group and, where appropriate, in departmental or institutional forums.
- 6.5 In addition, recipients will be asked to provide a follow-up update **two years after the funded activities** in order to assess longer-term outcomes that may not be apparent in the initial report.

7. Application Timeline

- Applications open: 20/08/2026
- Applications close: 30/09/2026
- Results announced: 20/11/2026

8. Intellectual Property

- 8.1 In case of approval, a Letter of Agreement (or “Consortium Agreement”) should be signed between CNPEM and the partner MPI establishing how Intellectual Property rights, confidentiality and publications will be treated jointly, in observance of the policies of each funding Party.
- 8.2 The presentation of this document (8.1) is not mandatory for signing the Grant Term, however, CNPEM or MPI can request its presentation at any time.

9. Research Networking Tool (matchmaking)

Researchers from the Max Planck Institutes interested in finding partners in CNPEM can access www.pesquisadores.cnpem.br or FAPESP’s Virtual Library (www.bv.fapesp.br/en/). Researchers from CNPEM can access the search tool on the MPG website (<https://www.mpg.de/institutes>).

ANNEX 1

About Max Planck Society and its Institutes

The [Max Planck Society](#) operates a number of research institutions in Germany as well as abroad. These Max Planck Institutes are independent and autonomous in the selection and conduct of their research pursuits. To this end, they have their own, internally managed budgets, which can be supplemented by third party project funds. The quality of the research carried out at the institutes must meet the Max Planck Society's excellence criteria.

The MPIS related to the CNPEM's areas of interest are listed below:

1. [Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior](#)
Evolutionary Biology · Behavioural Biology · Ecology
2. [Max Planck Institute for Biological Cybernetics](#)
Neuroscience · Systems Neuroscience · Brain Imaging · Computational Neuroscience
3. [Max Planck Institute for Biological Intelligence](#)
Neuroscience · Behavioral Biology · Ecology · Evolutionary Biology
4. [Max Planck Institute for Biology of Ageing](#)
Developmental Biology · Evolutionary Biology · Genetics · Structural Biology
5. [Max Planck Institute for Biology](#)
Evolutionary Biology · Genetics · Microbiology · Developmental Biology
6. [Max Planck Institute for Biophysics](#)
Biophysics · Structural Biology · Membrane Proteins
7. [Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics](#)
Cell Biology · Genetics · Developmental Biology · Systems Biology
8. [Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology](#)
Ecology · Chemical Communication · Genetics · Evolutionary Biology
9. [Max Planck Institute for Chemical Energy Conversion](#)
Structural Biology · Cell Biology · Chemistry
10. [Max Planck Institute for Chemical Physics of Solids](#)
Solid State Physics · Quantum Materials · Materials Science
11. [Max Planck Institute for Chemistry](#)
Atmospheric Chemistry · Earth System Science · Environmental Science
12. [Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences](#)
Neurosciences · Cognitive Science · Linguistics
13. [Max Planck Institute of Colloids and Interfaces](#)
Immunobiology · Infection Biology · Medicine · Solid State Research
14. [Max Planck Institute for Dynamics of Complex Technical Systems](#)
Systems Engineering · Chemical Engineering · Process Systems · Modeling & Simulation
15. [Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Biology](#)
Evolutionary Theory · Genetics · Ecology · Microbiology
16. [Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics](#)
Astrophysics · Space Science · High-Energy Astrophysics · Cosmology
17. [Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience](#)
Neuroscience · Structural Biology · Cell Biology
18. [Friedrich Miescher Laboratory of the Max Planck Society](#)
Developmental Biology · Evolutionary Biology · Structural · Biology · Cell Biology
19. [Fritz Haber Institute of the Max Planck Society](#)
Surface Chemistry · Catalysis · Physical Chemistry · Materials Science
20. [Max Planck Institute of Geoanthropology](#)
Evolutionary Biology · Genetics · Earth Sciences
21. [Max Planck Institute for Heart and Lung Research](#)
Biomedical Research · Cardiovascular Biology · Pulmonary Biology · Regenerative
22. [Max Planck Institute for Immunobiology and Epigenetics](#)
23. Immunology · Epigenetics · Molecular Biology · Cell Biology

24. [Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology](#)
Infection Biology · Microbiology · Immunology · Host–Pathogen Interactions
25. [Max Planck Institute for Informatics](#)
Computer Science · Algorithms · Machine Learning · Graphics · Databases
26. [Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition](#)
Jurisprudence · Social and Behavioral Sciences
27. [Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems](#)
Robotics · Machine Learning · Materials Science · Bio-inspired Engineering
28. [Max Planck Institute für Kohlenforschung](#)
Chemistry · Solid State Research · Materials Science
29. [Max Planck Institute for Mathematics](#)
Mathematics · Geometry · Number Theory · Algebra
30. [Max Planck Institute for Mathematics in the Sciences](#)
Mathematical Modeling · Applied Mathematics · Complex Systems · Data Science
31. [Max Planck Institute for Medical Research](#)
Biomaterials · Biophysics · Cell Biology · Structural Biology
32. [Max Planck Institute for Metabolism Research](#)
Neuroscience · Metabolism · Obesity Research · Neuroendocrinology
33. [Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology](#)
Marine Microbiology · Biogeochemistry · Microbial Ecology
34. [Max Planck Institute for Terrestrial Microbiology](#)
Microbiology · Biochemistry · Synthetic Biology · Ecology
35. [Max Planck Institute for Molecular Biomedicine](#)
Stem Cells · Developmental Biology · Regenerative Medicine
36. [Max Planck Institute for Molecular Genetics](#)
Genomics · Medical Genetics · Computational Biology · Molecular Biology
37. [Max Planck Institute for Multidisciplinary Sciences](#)
Biophysics · Neuroscience · Structural Biology · Molecular Biology
38. [Max Planck Institute for Neurobiology of Behavior](#)
Neuroscience · Behavioral Neuroscience · Neuroethology
39. [Max Planck Research Unit for Neurogenetics](#)
Genetics · Medicine · Neurosciences · Cell Biology
40. [Max Planck Institute for Nuclear Physics](#)
Nuclear Physics · Quantum Dynamics · Astroparticle Physics · Precision Spectroscopy
41. [Max Planck Institute for the Science of Pathogens](#)
Genetics · Immunobiology · Infection Biology · Medicine · Microbiology
42. [Max Planck Institute for Physics](#)
Astronomy · Astrophysics · Particle Physics · Plasma Physics · Quantum Physics
43. [Max Planck Institute for the Physics of Complex Systems](#)
Quantum Physics · Nonlinear Dynamics · Statistical Physics · Materials Theory
44. [Max Planck Institute for the Science of Light](#)
Photonics · Quantum Optics · Optical Physics · Biophotonics
45. [Max Planck Institute for Molecular Physiology](#)
Structural Biology · Cell Biology · Physiology · Chemistry
46. [Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research](#)
Plant Biology · Genetics · Molecular Plant Physiology · Evolutionary Biology
47. [Max Planck Institute for Molecular Plant Physiology](#)
Plant Biology · Plant Metabolism · Systems Biology
48. [Max Planck Institute for Plasma Physics](#)
Plasma Physics · Fusion Energy · High-Temperature Physics
49. [Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research](#)
Polymer Science · Materials Science · Soft Matter Physics · Chemistry
50. [Max Planck Institute for Psychiatry](#)
Infection Biology · Medicine · Neurosciences · Physiology · Cognitive Science
51. [Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics](#)
Particle Physics · Plasma Physics · Quantum Physics
52. [Max Planck Institute for Security and Privacy](#)

- Cybersecurity · Cryptography · Data Privacy · Computer Science
53. [Max Planck Institute for Software Systems](#)
Computer Science · Distributed Systems · Verification · Machine Learning
54. [Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research](#)
Planetary Science · Solar Physics · Astrophysics · Space Missions
55. [Max Planck Institute for Solid State Research](#)
Solid State Physics · Materials Science · Nanoscience · Quantum Materials
56. [Max Planck Institute for the Structure and Dynamics of Matter](#)
Solid State Research · Material Sciences
57. [Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies](#)
Sociology · Political Economy · Social Theory · Governance
58. [Max Planck Institute for Sustainable Materials GmbH](#)
Chemistry · Solid State Research · Material Sciences · Governance

ANNEX 2

MPI-CNPEM Strategic Collaboration Seed Fund Application Form

1. LEAD APPLICANT AND PRINCIPAL CONTACT AT CNPEM	
Name:	
Title:	
CNPEM Unit (LNNano, LNLS, LNBR, LNBio, ILUM, DAT)	
Address:	
Email:	
2. LEAD CO-APPLICANT (and PRINCIPAL CONTACT) AT MAX PLANCK	
Name:	
Title:	
Max Planck Institute:	
Department:	
Address:	
Email:	
Where relevant please also include details of any third-country partners below:	

3. COLLABORATIVE PROJECT:	
3.1 Title:	
3.2 Project Summary: (100 words max)	
3.3 Intended timescale of activity:	
3.4 Total amount of funding requested:	
3.5 Itemized breakdown of costs, indicating whether funding is required from MPI or CNPEM	
3.6 STATEMENT: (500 words max, referencing the criteria outlined on item 3 of the application guidelines):	
3.7 Grant Type (Please select one): <i>Implementation: To support and strengthen existing faculty-faculty relationships leading to clearly defined outputs.</i> ☐ <i>Initiation: To encourage wider faculty involvement and expand institutional engagement.</i> ☐	
3.8 Describe the strategic importance or added value of the collaboration for your Unit and for CNPEM.	
3.9 What are the anticipated shared outcomes and benefits of the collaboration?	
3.10 What funding is available from other sources and is there potential for future external investment?	
3.11 Other documents listed at item 5.2 (in a single pdf document)	

ANNEX 3

Guidelines for “MPI’s Letter of Institutional Support”

Only to MPI applicants

Please check to mention:

- if there is any previous academic relationship to the PI
 - the interest of your institution in the project
 - the resources you will provide
-

[Insert MPI letterhead]

[Faculty/Sponsor Contact Information]

Re: Letter of Support

Dear (insert PI name),

I wish to express my enthusiastic support for your application to engage in a(n) Initiation Grant / Implementation grant, with the proposal “(insert proposal title)”.

I understand that you will pursue (insert a few words describing project) and I foresee that the growth resulting from this grant will propel the research of the investigators to new levels of productivity and discovery. As (insert title of person providing commitment letter), I can assure that the Institute will provide resources to facilitate this project led by (insert name of PI who will engage in the project at the MPI). Specifically, the Institute has designated [mention the resources the MPI will contribute: eg: the travel and accommodation expenses of MPI staff travelling to CNPEM, and access to facilities for the CNPEM staff, resource training (research stays), organization of workshops, etc] in order to accomplish the objectives of this grant.

I am highly supportive of the efforts as outlined in this proposal.

Best regards,

(insert title, name and position of person providing commitment letter)

ANNEX 4

Guidelines for “CNPEM’s Letter of Institutional Support”

Only to CNPEM applicants

Please check to mention:

- if there is any previous academic relationship to the PI
- the interest of your institution in the project
- the resources you will provide

Dear (insert PI name),

I am pleased to confirm CNPEM’s support for your application under the MPI-CNPEM Strategic Collaboration Seed Fund, entitled “(insert proposal title)”.

The proposed collaboration, focused on (insert a few words describing the project), is well aligned with CNPEM’s research environment and collaborative activities, and has the potential to contribute to the advancement of joint scientific initiatives.

CNPEM will support the participation of its research teams in the proposed activities, in accordance with internal procedures and the availability of resources. This includes facilitating the engagement of the CNPEM team in the collaborative work plan, as well as enabling access to institutional capabilities, where appropriate.

We welcome initiatives that strengthen international collaboration and foster the development of sustained partnerships, such as the one proposed here.

Sincerely,

(insert name)

(insert title)

CNPEM