

Call for collaborative projects UL / USM – 2nd edition

In 2025, Université de Lorraine (UL) and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) will celebrate the 25th anniversary of their partnership, which has regularly been deepened and extended to more scientific fields. In 2018, the partners signed a scientific and academic cooperation agreement creating a USM-UL center. This expresses a shared ambition to develop strong joint activities in education and in research.

During the joint USM-UL colloquium held in France on March 14-16, 2023, USM and UL jointly decided to fund **four joint projects**. In addition, seed funding was granted to several other collaborations between the two universities.

The next colloquium will be held in **May 8 & 9 2025** in Penang, Malaysia. The partners wish to use this opportunity to select **up to four new joint projects**. Each selected project will receive between 10 and 15 k€ from Université de Lorraine for the French team and between MYR 40 and 50k from USM for the Malaysian team. USM applicants need to follow basic criteria as listed by RCMO (see Appendix). In addition, these joint projects will be given priority for access to other funding, notably applications for PhD funding or for mobility grants.

The expected output from each project is:

1. ONE Master student with joint supervision.
2. At least ONE international publication.
3. Staff or student mobility for research attachment

Joint UL-USM teams wishing to answer this call must follow a two-step process:

(1) Before **28/02/2025**, submit a short description of the foreseen project – 4 pages max with milestones and expected outcome: student mobilities, joint research projects, scientific results, possible joint PhD topic to be proposed as a continuation of the collaboration, etc. When appropriate (this is not a prerequisite), description of existing work between the two teams, including student exchanges, publications, stays at the other university, joint supervision of Master or PhD students, post-doc exchanges, etc. The document must also contain a clear commitment from the two principle researchers from UL and USM. Submission must be sent by email to both Associate Professor Dr. Mohd Hazwan Husin (mhh@usm.my) and Prof. Cécile Nouvel (drie-cooperation-contact@univ-lorraine.fr).

A special session at the colloquium will provide room for presentation of the proposed projects. The teams are also invited to use the opportunity of the visit to USM of a UL delegation to meet with each other, have working sessions together, and prepare the details of their project.

(2) After the colloquium, the projects will be invited to submit a full version of their proposal, including a foreseen budget. The submitted projects will be evaluated by the Management Committee of the UL-USM center; these evaluations will be submitted to the center's Governing Board, which will decide on which projects to be funded, for which amount, and give feedback to all submissions.

Priority will be given to new, emerging collaborations that contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs), involving junior researchers. The 4 projects funded in the first round are

not eligible; a specific opportunity to apply for a second phase of funding will be proposed to them at a later stage, when they submit their final report.

Appendix

General Rules for USM applicants

USM – UL Grant Matching Application

Ceiling	: MYR 46,000.00 (S&T) MYR 36,000.00 (non-S&T)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VOT11000 – GRA allowance (MYR1,300.00 for minimum 18 months) • VOT21000 – Travel, Transportation and Living Expenses (capped only RM4,000) • VOT27000 – Research materials & supplies • VOT29000 – Professional services & others including printing, hospitality & honorarium
Duration	: 24 months
Expected Output	: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication: 1 WoS Q1/Q2 • Talent: 1 Master student, full research mode (co-supervision USM and UL)
PI Criteria	: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Open to academic staff with ACTIVE status ii. Each applicant may submit only one proposal as a Principal Investigator iii. Must have a Next Appointed Leader from USM (with permanent status) and collaborator(s) from the University of Lorraine (UL) iv. Must have a strong research track record in the eRNI system v. The application is also subject to ethics approval from JePEM and biosafety approval from USM (for relevant proposals)
Open Call Review:	: 20 th January 2025 – 28 th February 2025 by Mid-June 2025
Decisions Start:	: 3rd week of July 2025 at the latest September 2025