

## Announcement of the IUC 2026 Call

\*\*\* Restricted access\*\*\*

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| <p>Aim of an IUC project</p>    | <p>An Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) partnership is a long-term institutional cooperation project between a university in a partner country and Flemish universities and universities of applied sciences and arts, lasting 12 years.</p> <p>An IUC project strategy is steered by the strategic plan of the partner university and focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- enabling a change process within the partner university leading to improved institutional performance via transversal institutional strengthening sub-projects;</li> <li>- strengthening educational and research capacities via different academic theme based sub-projects,</li> </ul> <p>for the partner university to operate as driver of change for global sustainable development in its country, region, and globally.</p> <p>An IUC project targets partner institutions with whom one or more Flemish higher education institutions have already collaborated. This ensures trust among project partners and provides experience with each other's governance and management, enhancing results and efficiency. An IUC project aims at taking an already existing partnership to the next level, i.e., the level of a long-term, multi-institutional, and multi-stakeholder partnership with focus on institutional capacity building. Therefore, access to this programme is restricted.</p> |
| <p>IUC project phases</p>       | <p>An IUC project, lasting 12 years, is developed via different phases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Phase-in</b> (ca. 1 year): project formulation activities, preparing the operational and management modalities/set-up and support structure within the partner and Flemish university's policy framework and governance, and identification of (PhD) scholars.</li> <li>• Two main <b>project phases</b> of 5 years each, with a Phase 1 focusing on capacity building and creating the conditions for uptake, and a Phase 2 focusing on consolidation, uptake, impact, and sustainability.</li> <li>• <b>Phase-out</b> (ca. 1 year): taking stock of all results; financial and administrative closing; closing event; preparing for search for new funding opportunities to sustain the partnership</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Set-up of an IUC project</p> | <p>An IUC project adopts a Multi-Institutional Partnership (MIP) set-up, involving multiple teams of academics and specialists from the partner institution, as well as multiple Flemish universities and universities of applied sciences and arts.</p> <p>An IUC project also adopts a Multi-Stakeholder Partnership (MSP) set-up, involving different stakeholders from society (e.g., governments, civil society organizations, private sector) from the beginning.</p>  |
| <p>IUC selection procedure</p>  | <p><b>Stage 1 - Expression of Interest and Commitment:</b> focus on project vision and fit for purpose of the project partners</p>   |

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|                                       | <p><b>Stage 2 - Concept Note:</b> focus on fit for purpose of the partner university, project content, and consortium development (MIP and MSP)</p> <p><b>Stage 3 - Phase-In:</b> focus on fully fledged proposal, operational and management modalities/set-up &amp; support structure</p> <p>A maximum of 10 Expressions of Interest and Commitment will be selected. A maximum of 6 IUC projects can start on 1 September 2026.</p>   |
| Expression of Interest and Commitment | <p>Applicants are invited to develop a joint (Flemish-partner) Expression of Interest and Commitment. The focus is on selecting partnerships with an inspiring impactful project vision, supported by a partner and a Flemish university that are both fit for purpose. High-level institutional commitment from their respective academic authorities is essential to ensure the success of the IUC project and institutionally contribute to it.</p> <p>The main elements of the Expression of Interest and Commitment are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Process:</b> how was the proposal developed, who is involved, track record, etcetera.</li> <li>2. A presentation of the <b>partner institution:</b> profile and value framework, track record of cooperation with Flemish higher education institutions, institutional strategy, context analysis, factsheet.</li> <li>3. <b>Project content:</b> a high-level project <b>vision</b></li> <li>4. <b>Project organisation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinators: presentation of the coordinators' team, their track record of cooperation, motivation, justification of fit for purpose, etcetera.</li> <li>• Partner and Flemish institution: organisation of the project, justification of fit for purpose,</li> </ul> <p>Letters of commitment from the rector of the involved institutions for the project, project organization and the coordinator.</p> </li> <li>5. Partnership: approach to broaden and embed the partnership locally and in Flanders as Multi-Institutional and Multi-Stakeholder Partnership</li> </ol> |
| IUC partner countries                 | Benin, Bolivia, Cuba, DR Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam   |
| IUC partner institutions              | <p><u>Profile</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to all recognised universities located in an IUC partner country. Top 2000 institutions of the <a href="#">Webometrics Ranking of Universities</a> list is not eligible.</li> </ul> <p><u>Cooperation track record</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The partner institution should have been awarded at least one VLIR-UOS project (SI, TEAM, ITP, or JOINT) that started in 2015 or later but before 31 August 2024. In case the VLIR-UOS project has not yet been finalised by 31 August 2024, additional justification of (VLIR-UOS project) management performance must be provided.</li> <li>• Former IUC universities are not eligible.</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <p><u>Number of applications</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A partner institution can submit only one application.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>IUC coordinators</p>                | <p><u>Affiliation and statute of the coordinators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flemish coordinator: professor at a Flemish university with a ZAP statute (Independent Academic Personnel), with a minimum ZAP appointment level of 10% (or equivalent), and an 80% employment status, and with minimum 7 remaining active years at the time of submission. A co-coordinator should be appointed in case the coordinator does not have 7 more active years to go, with the co-coordinator having at least 7 remaining active years and meeting the eligibility criteria for coordinatorship</li> <li>Partner promoter: professor, with at least an 80% employment status at the partner university involved</li> </ul> <p><u>Additional criteria</u></p> <p>A Flemish academic can be coordinator of only one IUC project. Flemish coordinators of ongoing IUC projects on the date of submission of the Expression of Interest and Commitment are not eligible.</p> |
| <p>Annual budget of an IUC project</p> | <p>The maximum annual budget of an IUC project is still under revision. Currently it stands at € 600,000, meaning that the budget for a first phase of cooperation is up to € 3,000,000.</p> <p>The final budget will be mentioned in the Call.</p>   |
| <p>Important dates</p>                 | <p>The Call for Expressions of Interest and Commitment will be launched on 4 July 2024.</p> <p>An online information session will be organised on 8 July 2024, from 14h00 PM to 16h00 PM CET. You can already register <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p><b>Deadline</b> for the submission of an Expression of Interest &amp; Commitment is 17 October 2024 (17h00 CET).</p> <div data-bbox="432 1301 1382 1832" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>Stage 1: Expression of Interest &amp; Commitment</b></p> <pre> graph LR     A[Call for Expression of Interest &amp; Commitment<br/>4 July 2024 (tentative)] --&gt; B[Submission Expression of Interest &amp; Commitment<br/>17 October 2024]     B --&gt; C[Selection Expression of Interest &amp; Commitment<br/>Week of 9 December 2024]   </pre> </div>  |

## Stage 2: Concept Notes



## Stage 3: Phase-in

