



## Exeter – UBCO Sustainability & Resilience Partnership

### 2025-2026 Visiting Academic Program Grants- Guidelines

#### Background

Exeter and UBC Okanagan (UBCO) have developed a growing number of collaborations advancing mutual interests in teaching, research, and public service through formal agreements and joint funding mechanisms dating back to 2017. The next phase of collaborative engagement will be focused on some of our shared strategic priorities. The collaboration will operate under the banner of the [Exeter - UBCO Sustainability & Resilience Partnership](#).

Both Universities are home to world-leading academics taking interdisciplinary approaches to tackle the major challenges of our age; building resilience and looking for solutions to the challenges presented by climate, environmental, and social changes. The Exeter – UBCO Sustainability & Resilience Partnership aims to generate exceptional research and teaching; to connect our talented researchers, educators, and higher education professionals in efforts to solve problems particular to our regional contexts. The approach will recognize the excellent foundations and existing linkages shared between Exeter and UBCO faculty, and give fresh focus through 3 Key Thematic focus areas:

1. **Adaption to Climate and Ecological Change:** Bringing together expertise from engineers, climate scientists, ecologists, environmental humanities, and policymakers to explore solutions to the climate crisis and build resilience in our communities.
2. **Innovative Health Initiatives:** Encouraging interdisciplinary approaches that impact positively on human health & performance, focusing on the needs of our regional communities, building outstanding health education together, and catalyzing new research.
3. **Enhancing Social Justice:** Combining the unique perspectives of Exeter and UBCO faculty / staff to lead progress to create a fairer, socially just, and inclusive society. We will seek to work in partnership with our local communities to structure our research, creative, and education initiatives together, delivering positive impact for the places where we are situated.

The Visiting Academic Program offers funding for a faculty member at the University of British Columbia's Okanagan campus to invite a faculty member at the University of Exeter (or vice versa) for **two weeks to one month**, with the purpose of initiating new or reinforcing existing initiatives. Researchers and Scholars from all disciplines are eligible.

The **2025/2026 Visiting Academic Program Grants** are now open for applications, with a closing date of **2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025**.

#### Objectives

The key aims of the Visiting Academic Program are:

- To develop and expand relationships between Exeter and UBCO
- To support both research and education initiatives
- To enable grant holders to develop projects for Initiator funding, Catalyst funding, and/or competitive, larger scale external grant applications.



### Funding details

Applications up to a maximum **CAD \$7,000 / GBP £4,000** are invited.

Funding will be provided to the lead applicant who will be responsible for the budget and for all arrangements.

Awardees are expected to complete their visit and utilize the funds by the end of July 2026. Funds that are not utilized within the specified period will be returned to their source.

### Eligibility Criteria

Visiting Academic Program grants will be available to the whole academic community at Exeter and UBCO. Eligible costs include:

- travel and subsistence costs (meals and accommodation) for the faculty
- air travel, which must be claimed at the most economical rate available
- travel cancellation insurance and seat reservation charges accommodations
- travel health insurance for the faculty if they do not receive any such benefits from their institution and/or other source
- safety-related expenses for field work, such as protective gear, immunizations, etc.;
- entry visa fees when required for the purpose of research;
- childcare expenses while a chairholder who is a nursing mother or single parent is travelling:
  - the eligible cost for a single parent is limited to overnight childcare costs incurred while the chairholder is travelling;
  - the eligible cost for a nursing mother who is travelling with a child is limited to the customary cost of childcare and airfare if applicable.

The following items are not eligible for funding under this scheme:

- academic salaries
- third-party travel costs
- publication costs
- student fees / tuition
- indirect costs, estates/capital costs and overheads associated with internal research facilities
- commuting costs of the faculty or research team between their residence and place of employment, or between two places of employment
- passport and immigration fees
- reimbursement for airfare purchased with personal frequent flyer points programs

### Application Process

Applicants will need to complete the Visiting Academic Program application form in conjunction with their counterpart(s) at the partner institution. Funding will be provided to the travelling faculty member who will be responsible for their travel arrangements.

Identical copies of the application along with a signature page should be submitted to both institutions at the below email addresses by **2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025**.



Exeter: [GP-Funding@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:GP-Funding@exeter.ac.uk)

UBCO: [vpawards.ubco@ubc.ca](mailto:vpawards.ubco@ubc.ca)

Applications will be jointly assessed by a panel of senior administrator and key academic leads for the partnership. Lead applicants will be notified within the specified timeframe (see Key Dates).

### Assessment Criteria

Applications will be assessed via a competitive selection process based on the following criteria:

- Strategic fit.
- Quality of initiative / activity plan as outlined in the application.
- Perceived value from the investment.
- Potential to expand upon existing or newly identified areas for collaboration.
- Contribution to advancing and sustaining the Exeter - UBCO partnership.

### Feedback and Submissions

Feedback is not usually provided for Visiting Academic Program applications. Resubmission is by invitation only.

### Key Dates

Date	Activity
May 2025	Calls for applications issued
2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2025	Application deadline
Late July	Applicants notified of outcome
August 15, 2025	Earliest project start date – The expectation is that the travel will take place for most awardees during either the first or second semester of the 2025/26 academic year.
July 31, 2026	Latest project end date (visit completed)
1 month after the visit	Post-project report submission deadline

### Grant acquittal and reporting

Awardees must agree to adhere to all requirements related to the receipt of funding including deadlines and procedures for acquittal of funds and reporting on outcomes.

Awardees are expected to complete their visit and utilize the funds by the end of July 2026. Funds that are not utilized within the specified period will be returned to their source.

Within 1 month of the visit, awardees will be required to submit a brief report outlining the successes and outcomes of the project. Report forms will be provided.

This report will be utilized for the follow up of potential opportunities, reporting on outcomes and to highlight successes of the initiative between UBCO & Exeter.

Awardees who embark on international travel are required to abide by official reporting, insurance and registration requirements as outlined in:



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



University  
of Exeter

**UBCO policies:** <https://finance.ubc.ca/expenditure-guidelines-0/travel-expenditures>

**Exeter policies:**

[https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/governanceandcompliance/University\\_Travel\\_Policy\\_Jan\\_2024.pdf](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/governanceandcompliance/University_Travel_Policy_Jan_2024.pdf)

### Contacts

Please consult your home institution contacts if you would like any additional information.

**Exeter:** Stuart Westhead (Global Partnerships Regional Head – North America & Europe)

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**UBCO:** Karis Shearer (Associate Professor, Program Chair) [karis.shearer@ubc.ca](mailto:karis.shearer@ubc.ca); Strategic Initiatives & Institutional Programs Team [vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca](mailto:vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca)



## Annex A

### Assessment Criteria

This guidance has been drawn up to assist applicants when completing their Visiting Academic Grant application forms. The purpose is to explain what type of information and evidence is required to satisfy the assessment criteria.

Assessment criteria	Evidence Required
Strategic fit	Clear information on how the proposed project would enhance the development of one of the established themes and, if applicable, subthemes.
Quality of initiative/activity	How well the application has been considered and planned, and the strength of its potential for taking forward a development or collaboration. Are the goals stretching but achievable? Using data to substantiate, the bid should identify the need for and value of the proposed project and how these fits with UoE and UBCO objectives. Include supporting details on how the project would be significantly enhanced by being undertaken through this initiative.
Perceived value from the investment:	Is the proposal offering value for money? Is it communicating clear evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a unique opportunity that is in line with the initiative's purpose</li> <li>• mobilizing a new or already interested, but perhaps disparate, research group, or disciplines, to come together and collaborate for the purpose of step change quality research and teaching</li> <li>• tangible and quantifiable outcomes and impact for the benefit of the institutions as well as the more immediate group</li> <li>• the potential to publish high quality papers, influence policy, and leverage external funding</li> </ul>
Potential to expand upon existing or newly identified collaboration	Evidence of strength and potential of the relationship. How can the group and its work develop beyond the project? What mechanisms will be used to ensure ongoing communications and interaction? Clear sense of potential trajectory for the project and the relationship.
Advancing and sustaining the partnership	Communicates how the project relationship would contribute to sustaining and strengthening the partnership.