

PHARMASCIENCEHUB FUNDING CALL

Strategic Use of Core Facilities for Profiling Research Projects

Background & Objectives

The **PharmaScienceHub (PSH)** is launching a funding programme to promote the use of **Core Facilities (CFs) at Saarland University (UdS)** for research projects that are strategically aligned with PSH profile areas. A key objective of this call is to improve access to **newly established Core Facilities**, especially for early-career researchers and newly appointed professors, thereby enabling broader and more inclusive use of cutting-edge infrastructure. The programme supports the investigation of novel scientific questions, strengthens research excellence in PSH profiling areas, fosters interdisciplinary collaboration, and paves the way for competitive third-party funding applications (e.g., DFG, BMBF) or translational research pathways (e.g. proof of concept in preparation for later start-ups).

Funding Scope

Total programme budget:	Approx. 150,000 EUR, funding 3-5 proposals
Funding per project:	20,000–50,000 EUR (exceptions possible with written justification)
Project duration:	up to 6 months, experimental work must be completed and invoiced by December 15, 2025.
Eligible Expenses:	CF project costs (concrete offer of the respective CF)

Funding Criteria & Evaluation

All submitted proposals will be reviewed in a competitive process by an external expert board. The decision and notification will be communicated promptly. Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

- **Novelty, originality**, and the exploratory nature of the project.
- **Strategic alignment with PSH profile areas**, clear contribution to one or more areas
- **Scientific excellence** and hypothesis-driven approach: Methodological rigor, clarity of research questions, and coherence of study design.
- **Follow-up potential:** A well-defined plan for either preparing a third-party funding proposal within 1 year after project completion, or translational pathways toward clinical, technological, or industrial application of the research results.
- **Interdisciplinarity:** Integration of multiple research domains or cross-institutional collaboration.
- **Compliance** with FAIR principles and clear plans for open access publishing and data sharing.

Application Requirements

- **Who can apply?** PSH Members. Each PSH Member may submit only one proposal or be involved in only one application under this call.
- **Proposals must not exceed 3 pages** (excluding appendices).
- Proposals should be submitted in **English**.
- **Co-financing:** Applicants are expected to contribute to the Core Facility service costs. Junior research groups may request exemption with a clear justification.
- **Mandatory attachment:** An official service quote and detailed cost estimate from the respective Core Facility must be submitted as part of the application.

Required Documents:

1. **Project outline** (max. 3 pages – Word template available)
 - PI key data
 - Which CF is involved? What specific measurements or services are planned?
 - Scientific objective & hypothesis
 - What is the current scientific context? What's novel or exploratory?
 - Planned work & methodology
 - How does the project align with PSH priorities (e.g. nextAID³)?
 - Follow-up strategy for third-party funding (e.g. DFG) or translational steps.
 - Data management & publication: FAIR data handling, data analysis strategy, publication/dissemination strategy.
 - Brief timeline
2. **Official quote from the CF** (mandatory appendix including detailed cost breakdown)

Deadlines & Submission

Submission deadline:	May 31, 2025 (23:59 CEST)
Earliest possible start of funding:	June 15, 2025
Maximum duration of funding:	December 31, 2025
Submission:	via <ONLINE FORM LINK>