# International Research Partnership Fund

The University of Saskatchewan Internal International Project Grants are an initiative of, and funded by the **International Blueprint for Action:** <https://plan.usask.ca/international/index.php>

In 2015, Canada and all other United Nations Member States, committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which set 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to eliminate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity by the year 2030. **All Project Grants must demonstrate how their proposed project will advance the UN SDGs and work toward achieving the 2030 Agenda** ([link](https://sdgs.un.org/)).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Global Innovation Fund:****New Partnership Grant** | Stimulates **original and** **innovative new research collaborations to address global challenges**. |
| **International Research Partnership Fund:****Existing Partnership Grant** | Strengthens **research collaborations with existing partners to address global challenges**. Funding supports ongoing joint activities with existing strategic partners and helps to leverage external funding.  |
| **Global Community Service Fund:****Existing or New Partnership Stream** | Supports **existing or new collaborations and engagement with communities to improve welfare, quality of life, and community service** with and for communities around the world. Projects must demonstrate how the proposal will lead to at least one of the following: greater capacity building, stronger partnerships with the developing world, gender equality, and/or increased Indigenous engagement. |

**International Research Partnership Fund**

**Call for Proposals**

Application Deadline – December 15, 2025

1. **Objectives:**

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) has a long and successful history of global engagement in research and discovery. Increasing USask’s international collaborations enhances its faculty and student opportunities to access international facilities, funding, knowledge, and expertise. This increased access will significantly leverage the university community's research output and impact. By applying a local-global lens, USask is better positioned to address shared challenges through culturally informed and regionally relevant solutions. These international partnerships also contribute to the economic, social, and technological advancement of both Canada and Saskatchewan, strengthening our global competitiveness and local capacity.

The USask is committed to diversity, inclusion, and equity in the workplace and believes that our workforce should reflect the diversity of our students, faculty/staff members and community. The university is actively taking steps to achieve a representative workforce where everyone feels a sense of belonging, including women, members of a visible minority/racialized group, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, persons of any sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, and any others who contribute to the diversification of ideas and perspectives.

The International Research Partnership Fund aims to:

* **Strengthen research collaborations with existing partners**;
* **Support ongoing joint activities with existing strategic partners,** which would help to leverage external funding;
* Uplift projects proposing research solutions to advance the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)](https://sdgs.un.org/goals).
* Support USask’s research and development in the [Signature Areas of Research](https://research.usask.ca/about/signature-areas-of-research.php).
1. **Funding Amount:**
	1. Applicants may request up to $20,000 CAD[[1]](#footnote-2) from the International Research Partnership Fund to support ongoing joint activities with **existing** strategic partners and to leverage funding.[[2]](#footnote-3)
	2. Please note in order to be considered for the full grant amount, a multi-disciplinary approach is encouraged where applicable.
	3. The International Research Partnership Fund provides up to two (2) years of funding, with the possibility of extension for justified circumstances. Budget requests must be reasonable and justified.
	4. Total funds available: $60,000
	5. Number of projects expected to be funded: 3-4
2. **Cost Sharing:**
	1. Cost-Sharing only allows cost-share contributions, either cash and/or in-kind, that are deemed eligible project costs.
	2. USask project teams and their international partners applying for the International Research Partnership Fund must make a total contribution in cash and/or in kind of **15%** or more of the amount requested.

The 15% cash and/or in-kind contribution must consist of at least 10% from the international partner; and at least 5% from the USask team.

* 1. Cash and/or in-kind contributions from the international partner(s) must be confirmed by the partner institution in writing, which should be included in the application supporting documentation. Cash and/or in-kind contributions from the USask team is regarded confirmed with the internal USask unit’s academic approval of this application in UnivRS.
	2. **In-kind contributions** are non-cash contributions provided to the project in the form of goods or services to which a value can be attributed, and that would have been otherwise purchased and paid for during the project life cycle to achieve the results.
* In-kind contributions must be directly related to the project, offered at no cost, and based on the fair value[[3]](#footnote-4).
* In-kind contribution examples could include volunteer services, facilities and assets, travel and accommodation, etc.
* Please note that USask faculty members’ time spent on the project is not eligible as in-kind contribution.
1. **Eligibility:**
	1. Projects must be led by USask faculty members defined in section 3.3 of “[Eligibility to Apply for, Hold and Administer Research Funding](https://policies.usask.ca/policies/research-and-scholarly-activities/eligibility-to-apply-for%2C-hold-and-administer-research-funding.php)” policy and be co-led by a faculty member at an accredited international partner institution.

4.2 Please not that, to ensure partnership continuity, the following individuals at USask are not eligible to serve as project leads: faculty members with term appointments, special lecturers, adjunct professors, research associates, research scientists, senior research scientists, visiting faculty members, postdoctoral fellows and students. A Professor Emeritus is eligible to serve as a project lead, provided that at least one tenured or tenure-track faculty member at USask is included as a co-investigator. If there is any conflict between terms 4.1 and 4.2, term 4.2 shall prevail.

4.3 Full-time faculty members of St. Thomas More College may apply for the International Research Partnership Fund through their USask affiliation for research purposes.

* 1. In addition to USask and the international co-lead partner institution, other organizations may participate in the project where relevant. However, if these collaborating organizations are based in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries, they are responsible for covering the research and travel expenses incurred by their faculty, staff, and students, as these costs are not eligible for funding under this grant.
1. **Other Project Conditions:**
	1. Project co-leads at the USask and a partner institution are required to develop an application collaboratively. The USask lead will submit the finalized application, which **must be academically approved in UnivRS no later than** **December 15, 2025 at 4:00 PM CST**.
	2. No expenditure exceeding the amount of the grant approved for each project will be reimbursed.
	3. This Fund covers direct costs of research, scholarly, and artistic work, including materials and supplies, partnership development, and knowledge mobilization. Project-related international airfare (economy), airport taxes, visas, medical insurance, vaccination, ground transportation, local accommodation, and per-diems for meals can also be covered by this fund. Up to 20% of the awarded amount can be used to organize and/or present at academic conferences directly related to knowledge mobilization for this project.
	4. Up to 20% of the awarded amount may be transferred to the international co-lead at the partner institution when it is absolutely necessary. Sufficient rationale must be outlined in the budget justification.
	5. **This fund does not cover:** Institutional Costs of Research (indirect costs/overhead); subcontract costs or honoraria payment for any project applicants.
	6. This grant is not meant to support students’ full degree training; however, it can cover costs to hire student trainee(s) or other research staff to carry out part of the project activities.

To assist in estimating a total cost for research staff and trainees, including associated required benefits in relation to collective agreements and mandatory employer costs (CPP, EI, WCB, vacation pay, statutory holiday pay), please visit the **Research Proposal Development (Pre-Award) Salary and Compensation Budget Guide**: [https://wiki.usask.ca/display/public/CPKB/Research+Proposal+Development+%28Pre-Award%29+Salary+and+Compensation+Budget+Guide](https://wiki.usask.ca/display/public/CPKB/Research%2BProposal%2BDevelopment%2B%28Pre-Award%29%2BSalary%2Band%2BCompensation%2BBudget%2BGuide)

* 1. The grants offered by the USask must align with the USask travel expense guidelines and per diem rates. ([https://wiki.usask.ca/display/public/CPKB/Travel+Expense+Guidelines](https://wiki.usask.ca/display/public/CPKB/Travel%2BExpense%2BGuidelines))

If you are traveling to a foreign country other than the United States, the university uses the foreign per diem rates as published by the [National Joint Council of Canada (NJCC)](https://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/app_d.php?lang=eng). The university uses the commercial accommodation (C) rate for the given city.

**For Example:** If the project lead is travelling to Mexico City for one week as proposed in their application, the individual can expense per diem meals using ‘C-Day 1-30 – Mexico City’ as outlined in the NJCC, as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breakfast: $28.55  | Lunch: $56.35 | Dinner: $72.45 | Total: $157.35 |

$157.35 x 7 day = **$1101.45 CAD per diem total**

\*Use ‘Other’ city if the location is not listed. For example, ‘C-Day 1-30 Mexico Other’ would be Breakfast: $22.84; Lunch: $45.08 and Dinner: $57.96.

* 1. The project duration is two (2) years, with the possibility of extension for justified circumstances. The earliest start date of the project can be March 15, 2026, and all activities and financial transactions, including submission of final narrative and financial reports, must be completed by March 15, 2028.
	2. Budget requests must be reasonable and justified. The adjudication committee reserves the right to work with applicants to make adjustments to the project activity and financial plan.
	3. International collaborative teams that obtain external funding receive more favorable consideration in the adjudication process.
	4. **Applicants who currently hold or have completed previous internal International Project Grants (Global Community Service Fund, Global Innovation Fund, or International Research Partnership Fund) must demonstrate how this proposal is different and/or evolved.**
	5. Two-way travel is encouraged. The USask project lead is required to spend at least seven days excluding travel time at the partner institution to allow for substantive partnership development to take place.
	6. During your partnership development process, if you plan to invite visiting faculty/staff members or visiting research students, please follow steps below for:

[Visiting Professors](https://vpfaculty.usask.ca/appointments/visiting-professor.php)

[Visiting Research students](https://grad.usask.ca/admissions/alternate-applicants/visiting-research-student.php)

* 1. Proposals must demonstrate how the project will be scaled up and sustained past the completion date. Applicants should leverage local systems for efficiencies and engage community stakeholders to increase the likelihood of being able to scale the project.
	2. Successful applicants will be obligated to participate in a short Project Management Orientation Meeting delivered by the International Office or send an appropriate designate to represent them prior to receiving the funding.
	3. An interim report must be submitted to the International Office at international.office@usask.ca no later than **March 15, 2027.** A final report, including a cash/in-kind contribution report, must be submitted to the International Office at international.office@usask.ca no later than **March 15, 2028**.

The International Office will provide reporting templates. The cash/in-kind contribution report must demonstrate that the project team has made the required cash/in-kind contributions.

* 1. Successful Applicants will be expected to develop a strong knowledge mobilization plan integrated throughout the project. Recipients are also expected to contribute and support USask knowledge mobilization efforts, including but not limited to institutional symposia and workshops, social media and web-based communications.
	2. Applicants are expected to incorporate considerations related to travel safety, research security, research data management, export controls, data transfer restrictions, and risk mitigation. Please consult below resources for more information:

[USask Research Security Hub](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/rasi/resource-hub/safeguarding-research.php)

[Government of Canada: Safeguarding Your Research](https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/safeguarding-your-research)

[USask Research Data Management Resources](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/research-support/research-data-management.php)

[Government of Canada Travel Advisories](https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories)

1. **Selection Criteria:**

The adjudication committee will use the criteria outlined below to assess proposals. Each criterion is weighted, noted in bold as a percentage.

* **Merit of proposed activities and anticipated outcomes (40%)**

Proposed project must be clearly presented. Leads international research and partnership development, including scientific, scholastic, or artistic advancement(s). Has the potential for technology development, policy formulation, knowledge translation and dissemination, additional joint initiatives, etc. Projects must be truly international in scope, for example, international partners are major players (not just an "add-on"), and the proposed program will have high international impact.

* **Implementation of project activities and quality of team (35%)**

Project team’s quality, expertise and complementarity of team members, interdisciplinary if applicable, HQP training, feasibility, timeline, milestones, budget, other sources of funding.

* **Scale and Sustainability (15%)**

Proposed projects should extend beyond the benefit of an individual researcher or research team. The proposal should demonstrate the scale and sustainability of the proposed outcomes, as well as the international partnerships after the project completion through effective engagement with selected partners (for example, local organizations, ministries, NGOs, etc.).

* **Special considerations (10%)**

Proposals should address two special considerations: (1) Equity Diversity and Inclusion[[4]](#footnote-5); and (2) the development of research partnership solutions that advance [the United Nations SDGs](https://sdgs.un.org/goals).

1. **Evaluation and Selection Committee:**
	1. An internal adjudication committee will be formed to review all complete, eligible proposals received by the published deadline.
	2. The adjudication committee will be made up of representatives from the Office of the Vice-President Research and various colleges/schools/centres. All applicants will be notified of funding decisions.
2. **Application Submission Instructions:**
	1. The finalized application must be submitted and academically approved in [UnivRS](https://univrsapp.usask.ca/converis/secure/client/login) (see detailed instructions below) **by December 15, 2025 at 4:00 PM CST;**
	2. **Submitting your application in UnivRS:**
		1. For details on how to create and submit your internal application in UnivRS, please review the following instructions: <https://wiki.usask.ca/pages/releaseview.action?pageId=1428947160>
		2. **UnivRS Project Application data to be entered:**

**Type of Project Application:** Internally Funded

**Key Information, Title:** Title of the project grant application

**Key Information, Start/End Dates:** March 15, 2026 – March 15, 2028

**Key Information, Agencies:** Office of the Vice-President Research (OVPR) / Office of the President / University of Saskatchewan

**Key Information, Agency Program:** International Research Partnership Fund

**Applicants:** USask lead/PI and all USask Co-Investigators listed on your application form (Section 4.0 Research Team) must be included in your UnivRS submission, in the ‘Applicants’ section/tab.

\*All other data must be entered similarly to standard UnivRS project applications. Please refer to the link above listed in 8.2.1 for further details.

* + 1. The UnivRS submission must include the application form and all required supporting documentation as a **single PDF, using Times New Roman, 12 pt. font** uploaded to the ‘Final Project Documents’ section of your UnivRS application.

**Questions/Comments:** Please direct any questions to the International Research Team at international.office@usask.ca

**International Research Partnership Fund**

**Application Form**

1. **Title:**

**\***Please use the same title in your UnivRS project application under *Key Information, Title.*

1. **Project term dates**

Start date:

Completion date:

\*Please note the earliest project start date can be March 15, 2026 and the project must be completed on or before March 15, 2028.

1. **Research Team** (add additional rows as needed):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Name** | **Position** | **Academic unit** | **Email address** | As a researcher on this project team, I agree to my role and responsibilities proposed in this application (**YES / NO**)\* USask lead/PI and **all** USask Co-Investigators must be included in your UnivRS submission, in the ‘Applicants’ section/tab. |
| **USask lead** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Co-lead at a foreign institution** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Co-investigator at USask** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Co-investigator at a foreign institution** |  |  |  |  |  |
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**Please review the following three aspects and check the corresponding box to confirm your understanding and compliance with the requirements:**

[ ] The project lead has conducted due diligence and, where necessary, consulted the [USask Research Security team](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/rasi/resource-hub/safeguarding-research.php) to ensure that all individuals and organizations involved in the project, both in Canada and abroad, are not listed on the [Consolidated Canadian Autonomous Sanctions List](https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/international_relations-relations_internationales/sanctions/consolidated-consolide.aspx?lang=eng) or the [Named Research Organizations List](https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/safeguarding-your-research/guidelines-and-tools-implement-research-security/sensitive-technology-research-and-affiliations-concern/named-research-organizations).

Public Safety Canada’s Research Security Centre has provided [a self-assessment questionnaire](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/rasi/documents/research-security/strac-affiliation-questionnaire.docx) for “Affiliations of Concern” to a Named Research Organization (NRO). Researchers can use this questionnaire to determine if they have an affiliation to an NRO and reach out to research.security@usask.ca for advice and guidance on the steps to end the affiliation.

[ ] The project lead ensures that all individuals and organizations involved in the project, both in Canada and abroad, adhere to applicable [research ethics](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/ethics/index.php) and comply with institutional policies and procedures governing the [responsible conduct of research](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/research-support/responsible-conduct-of-research/responsible-conduct-of-research.php).

[ ] The project lead ensures that all individuals and organizations involved in the project, both in Canada and abroad, understand and implement an appropriate [research data management plan](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/research-support/research-data-management.php) for the proposed project.

1. **Have you been previously awarded or currently holding an internal International Project Grant** (Global Community Service Fund, Global Innovation Fund or International Research Partnership Fund)? YES / NO

If YES, describe how this proposal is different and/or evolved from the previously funded international project grant

(maximum 300 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5. Project Description**

\*In the brackets, please indicate word count.

**5.1 Project Abstract:** Provide a lay summary to summarize the proposal for a non-expert audience (please note the lay summary of successful applications may be posted on the USask website and used by the International Office to publicize the International Research Partnership Fund sponsored projects).

(maximum 200 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5.2 Project Objectives and Approach(es):** List the objectives of the proposed research/scholarly/artistic work and collaboration. Describe literature gap(s) and justify methodological approaches, including specific procedures and activities.

(maximum 800 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5.3 Project Development and Advancement:** State expected international research and partnership development through scientific advances, technology development, policy formulation, artistic creation and development, scholarship, and/or innovation, etc.

(maximum 500 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5.4 Knowledge Mobilization Plan:** Identify academic and non-academic audiences interested in the proposed research/scholarly/artistic work and describe your strategies to ensure the project results are used by them.

(maximum 500 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5.5 Partnership History:** Provide a brief description of the partnership history and existing work with the international partners(s).

(maximum 250 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5.6 Project Collaboration Team:** Describe the key areas of expertise of the core team members, respective roles and responsibilities of team members involved. It will be important to consider the complementary nature and value-added resulting from the international collaboration on this project. If applicable, highlight any world-class researchers or high potential early career researchers[[5]](#footnote-6) that will be involved. Additionally, the interdisciplinarity of team members, if applicable, will also be positively regarded.

(maximum 500 words; word amount: \_\_\_\_)

**5.7 Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) Training:** Describe the training, mentoring, and learning strategies to support HQP.

(maximum 300 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5.8 Activity Plan:** Please complete the table below and indicate milestones / core activities with dates and duration (add or remove rows as needed).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **Dates/Duration (months)** |
| **Milestone 1:** |  |
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| **Milestone 2:** |  |
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| **Milestone 3:** |  |
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**5.9 Budget Summary** (add additional rows as needed):

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity /Expense**  | **Cost ($)** | **Funding requested from this Fund ($)** | **Funding from other sources (indicate the amount, source, and status (confirmed/pending))** | **Budget Justification** |
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| **TOTAL COST** |  |  |  |  |

\*The grants offered by the USask must align with the USask travel expense guidelines and per diem rates. ([https://wiki.usask.ca/display/public/CPKB/Travel+Expense+Guidelines](https://wiki.usask.ca/display/public/CPKB/Travel%2BExpense%2BGuidelines))

\*\*The international partner’s cash and/or in-kind contributions must be confirmed by the partner in writing, which should be included in the support letter from the partner institution. Cash and/or in-kind contributions from the USask team is regarded confirmed with the internal USask unit’s academic approval of this application in UnivRS.

**Please note** if you plan to transfer part of the funds to the international co-lead at your partner institution, please indicate the amount and the justification in the below section. The transferred amount cannot exceed 20% of the total amount requested from this grant. If this scenario is not applicable to your proposed project, please indicate N/A.

(maximum 250 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

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**5.10 Anticipated Funding:** List external funding applications anticipated as a result of this grant/collaboration.

(maximum 250 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**5.11 Scale and Sustainability:** Please describe how (1) the proposed project outcomes, (2) the international partnership(s), and (3) the effective engagement with selected partners (for example, local organizations, ministries, NGOs, industry etc.) will be scaled up and sustained past the completion date of this project.

(maximum 300 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**6. Special considerations**

**6.1** Explain how **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** have been considered in the team composition, team cultural practice as well as overall project design, implementation, evaluation and impact where it is applicable. (Applicants are encouraged to refer to the USask OVPR RASI EDI resources [here](https://vpresearch.usask.ca/rasi/resource-hub/edi-equity-diversity-inclusion.php), as well as Canada’s Tri-Agency guidance on considering EDI in your application [[here](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/EDI-EDI/Resources_Ressources_eng.asp)](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/_doc/EDI/Guide_for_Applicants_EN.pdf))

(maximum 250 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**6.2** **SDG Relevance**: Describe how the proposed project will seek and develop research partnership solutions that advance the United Nations SDGs, including the targets and indicators of the 2030 agenda.

(maximum 250 words; word count: \_\_\_\_)

**7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:**

[ ]  **Curriculum Vitae**

Attach a **CV or biography (maximum four pages)** for each of the **project co-leads**. Include only recent activities, i.e., within the last five years). Demonstrate the impact of research outcomes (i.e., student supervision, publications, project and extension services, etc.). CVs/biographies that exceed four pages in length will not be accepted.

[ ]  **Signed letter of support on institutional letterhead****from the international partner institution**.

The letter must also confirm the partner institution’s cash and/or in-kind contributions equal at least 10% of the International Research Partnership Fund requested.

[ ]  **A completed and signed** [***Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosure form***](https://internationaloffice.usask.ca/conflict-of-interest.php)**.** This COI form must be completed by the USask lead applicant.

[ ]  **A completed and signed** ***[consent to use of image/recording form](https://usaskca1.sharepoint.com/sites/Communications/Shared%20Documents/Forms/documents.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FCommunications%2FShared%20Documents%2FForm%2Dphoto%2Drelease%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FCommunications%2FShared%20Documents)*.** This form must be completed by the USask lead applicant. If awarded, and future photos/images of other project team members are used, it is the responsibility of the USask lead to obtain signed forms from photographed individuals.

\*This consent form will only be retained for successful applicants. Forms from unsuccessful applications will be destroyed by the International Office.

1. This is an internal opportunity, which is a form of seed funding and can be competitive, with small(er) amount of funds available. Please keep this in mind when developing your budget. If we do not use the full amount of funding allocated to a specific grant category, we will re-allocate that funding to the highest ranked applications in other grant categories. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Applications must demonstrate why the international co-lead would be considered a new or existing international partner.

**Please note:** An existing international partner is an in international co-lead with whom the USask lead has previously held a grant, conducted a project/production/exhibit/trial with, or co-authored a publication with (excluding mega co-publications with more than 20 authors). A new international partner is an international co-lead with whom the USask lead has never engaged in these abovementioned activities with. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Fair value: Methodology based on a value that can be attributed to a service or asset, excluding profit margin and/or overhead. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. USask Office of the Vice-President Research (OVPR), Research Acceleration and Strategic Initiatives (RASI) EDI Resources: https://vpresearch.usask.ca/rasi/resource-hub/edi-equity-diversity-inclusion.php [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Please refer to Tri-Agency’s definition of early career researchers [here](https://www.canada.ca/en/research-coordinating-committee/priorities/support-early-career-researchers.html#1). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)