GCRF: RCUK Collective Fund

Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries

Applications by invitation only

Deadline for full proposals: 24 May 2018, 4pm (BST)

Summary

Following a highly competitive call for outline proposals, Research Councils UK invites 52 outlines representing a broad range of development challenges to develop full proposals. Between £8M - £20M (100% full economic cost) will be available for each Hub, provided over a five year period starting on 1st December 2018. Depending on the quality of the applications received we anticipate awarding 12-15 Hubs.

Each Hub is required to demonstrate:
- Challenge and impact focus
- Interdisciplinary research excellence
- Global partnerships
- Organisation and leadership

Applications which do not adequately demonstrate genuine interdisciplinarity, equitable international partnerships and breadth across and between a number of Sustainable Development Goals, will not be considered fundable.

Assessment of the full proposals will be through a two-stage competitive process. The first stage will comprise of external expert review and assessment by an international, interdisciplinary Panel. Following this, the most competitive full proposals will be invited to interview.

1. Aims and scope of the call

Intractable Development Challenges
This call focuses on transformative approaches to address currently intractable development challenges. Intractable development challenges are multidimensional and complex challenges that have proven to be resistant to change, prone to fragmented responses and which cannot be solved by a single organisation or from one sectoral or disciplinary perspective.\(^1\)\(^2\) Typically such challenges cut across a number of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, because they are multidimensional in nature, they require:

\(^1\) sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1758GSDR 2015 Advance Unedited Version.pdf
\(^2\) sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2328Global Sustainable development report 2016 (final).pdf
the capacity to think across and between as well as within the thematic areas of the various SDGs;

- a clear understanding of the ways in which different disciplines can contribute to a step change in delivery against these challenges; and

- an awareness of the underlying factors and contexts (including social, political, economic, cultural, technological and historical), interdependencies, synergies, tensions and trade-offs that promote, obstruct or even reverse delivery against the SDGs, both individually and collectively.

**Hub characteristics**

Each multi-institutional Hub should propose a coherent and ambitious vision, and bring together an international core strategic partnership, led by a Hub Director (the Principal Investigator) and strategically supported by co-director(s) who may be in the Global South or the UK, to conduct a world-leading and well-integrated programme of research. They should aim to stimulate transformative approaches and radical new thinking to address multi-dimensional and complex development challenges. This may include generation of impact through collaboration with relevant industrial sectors, civil society groups and NGOs, as well as government and other policy agencies.

Hubs must demonstrate how they will help to deliver the UK Strategy for the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF)³ and a step-change in research for development through:

**Challenge and impact focus**

- Challenge-led and impact-focussed, generating excellent and novel research and translating this into measurable real-world outcomes.

- A clear vision and integrated plan for the translation of the proposed research into measurable international development impact.

- The potential to deliver a broad range of impacts and scalable solutions at the local, national and/or international level.

- Developing a sustainable programme that has a legacy beyond the initial investment, with potential to leverage further support from development agencies, as well as financial or in-kind contributions including from universities and the private sector.

**Interdisciplinary research excellence**

- Excellent research capacity to conduct meaningful, well integrated and robust interdisciplinary research, including an appropriate range of research skills required to address the challenge(s).

- A demonstrable capacity to think across and between as well as within the thematic areas covered by the various SDGs, and a clear understanding of the way different disciplines working together contribute to the overall objectives of the Hub.

- Taking an interdisciplinary approach that assembles new knowledge and insight from across different research communities - transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries by integrating ground-breaking research with a better understanding of the social, political, economic, historical and cultural contexts.

- Commitment to build strategically on previous ODA and non-ODA investments (RCUK, DfID and other delivery partners) to add value to international efforts and improve co-ordination and ensure the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

**Global partnerships**

- An indispensable feature will be co-development with international partners and substantial, genuine and meaningful collaboration between UK and developing-

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³ UK Strategy for the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF):
country researchers, as well as relevant development agencies, Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), industry and other private sector organisations, policy makers, and other relevant local and international partners.

- An appropriate strategy for deep engagement with users, intermediaries and beneficiaries of research throughout the duration of the Hub.
- Full consideration of the relevant developing country context (e.g. languages, cultures, faiths, public engagement, legal frameworks, political and regulatory systems), ethical issues in the planning and conduct of research, and implementation of an ethical innovation and 'do no harm' approach.

**Organisation and leadership**

- Shared values and goals within the Hub and its partnerships.
- Ensuring strong research and operational leadership, including robust financial and risk management, assurance and governance.
- Implementing appropriate and effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks.
- The ability to learn and adapt, including demonstrating the agility to respond to opportunities arising over the lifetime of the award.

Further details on the criteria used for the assessment of full applications are included in the 'Assessment procedure' section (Section 3).

Hubs are expected to be innovative, building on identified needs and proposing a flexible programme of activities co-developed with international partners. The paramount objective is excellence and relevance of the research. To support this, each Hub will be required to propose and justify a portfolio of cross-cutting research, knowledge exchange and innovation activities, with due recognition to the following:

- Development of novel methodologies for interdisciplinary working, knowledge exchange and innovation, including where appropriate, disciplines that haven’t traditionally been oriented towards international development challenges
- Flexible funding to support emerging research opportunities (in the UK and relevant developing countries) arising over the lifetime of the Hub, including supporting sub-projects and engaging researchers and other stakeholders outside the original core partnership
- Activities to encourage idea generation, research syntheses, commercialisation, research translation and follow-on investment
- Partnership building, networking and stakeholder engagement to align the research with the local context and knowledge systems, contribution to policy/practice and/or commercialisation
- Capacity building activities which may include bespoke training; development of professional and transferable skills; development of tools, methodologies and guidelines; and/or staff exchange
- Pathway to impact activities to maximise the short, medium and long term impacts.
- Operational funding to build professional capability to support engagement and relationship management, research coordination, facilitation of new ideas and dissemination of outputs

For the flexible fund within your proposed Hub you should outline how the fund will be managed and administered, including the process(es) which will be used to ensure ODA compliance. An estimate of the proportion of funds that you anticipate will be spent in developing countries, the UK and non-UK developed countries should also be provided. You will be required to report annually on how these funds have been spent.
The same funding rules apply as those outlined in the Funding Available for research partner organisations (Section 2), e.g., for non-UK developed countries 50% of the funds must be found from other sources. All expenditure should follow the rules outlined in this call document and appropriate due diligence carried out.

Hubs must demonstrate full commitment from all organisations involved. This should be referenced in the Letters of Support and Justification of Resources. We expect a substantial and dedicated contribution from all organisations involved in the proposed Hub. This should primarily focus on contributions which complement those requested from RCUK and support the delivery of the Hub. This may include, but is not limited to, contribution towards capital, infrastructure and studentships. Contributions should reflect ability to resource i.e. expectations are reduced for organisations based in lower income countries.

Research ethics
By definition this programme is concerned with international co-operation to address issues of global importance. Underpinning the programme and all funded projects must be a strong research ethic based on mutual respect and understanding for different cultural, ethnic, social and economic beliefs and practices. Solutions to the proposed development challenge(s) must be rooted in, and acceptable to, the institutions, communities and societies where they will operate.

Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass areas where regulation and approval processes exist as well as areas where they do not. Applicants must ensure that the proposed research will be carried out to a high ethical standard and must clearly state how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the research commences and all risks are minimised.

The provisions of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 must be observed. All RCUK awards are made on the absolute condition that no work which is controlled by the Act will begin until the necessary licences have been obtained. All work supported by RCUK award must comply with the principles described in “Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research: expectations of the major research council and charitable funding bodies”4 (included in the guidance documents section of the call webpage). When collaborating with other laboratories, or where animal facilities are provided by third parties, researchers and the local ethics committee in the UK should satisfy themselves that welfare standards are consistent with the principles of UK legislation. Research involving the use of genetic resources must be carried out in accordance with the requirements set out in the Nagoya Protocol or equivalent national protocol.

Any research undertaken outside the UK must have both UK and respective country ethical approvals.

2. How to apply

Funding Available
Awards must be in the range of £8 - 20 million at 100% full economic cost (fEC), with the final figure dependent on the scope of the Hub and the scale of the challenge(s). The total budget

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4 www.nc3rs.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Guidelines/Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research- expectations of the major research councils and charitable funding bodies April 2017.pdf
(100% fEC) for each full proposal must be within 10% of the total budget (100% fEC) for the outline proposal.

Dependent on the quality of applications received we anticipate awarding 12-15 Hubs. It is expected that the largest Hubs will address the broadest and/or most complex challenges and involve the greatest breadth of partnerships. It is vital that each proposal demonstrates that the level of investment requested is commensurate to the scale and/or complexity of the proposed development challenge(s).

Awards will be over a five year duration, starting on 1st December 2018 with the potential for future extension dependent on their progress and the availability of funding. All successful awards will be subject to a stage gate review in year 3.

All awards will be expected to adhere to RCUK Terms and Conditions.

Eligibility

**Lead research organisation** – The lead organisation cannot be changed between the outline and full stages without prior permission from RCUK.

**Principal Investigator (PI)/Hub Director** – This individual should act as the figurehead for the Hub, providing intellectual leadership and oversight of the research and project management. The Hub Director must be employed by the lead organisation and the term of employment must extend beyond the duration of the proposed Hub.

The proposed roles and responsibilities for this individual will need to be clearly explained and justified in the proposal. The Hub Director should be able to demonstrate that they can:

- Articulate and deliver a clear vision for the proposed Hub
- Provide leadership and convene a range of UK and international researchers and organisations
- Drive advances in the relevant fields of study
- Lead innovative and creative programmes of research
- Manage large research programmes
- Broker and develop partnerships which add value to activities/programmes
- Deliver excellent impact from research

The Principal Investigator cannot be changed between the outline and full stages without prior permission from RCUK.

**Co-Investigators** – Co-Investigators on Hubs are expected to have significant intellectual input and form part of the leadership team. They must be based at either the lead organisation or a research partner organisation. Employees of project partners are not permitted to be co-investigators on proposals submitted to this call.

**Research partner organisations** – Both UK and international research organisations (for example higher education organisations, public laboratories, or other non-profit research intensive organisations) can be research partners and receive funds from the Hub award. Any UK-based research intensive organisation that is currently not eligible for Research Council funding will need to apply for Independent Research Organisation (IRO) status if it is to be a ‘research partner’ on a Hubs application. For more information on how to apply for IRO status please see [http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/) or contact Jan Tucker (Jan.Tucker@rcuk.ac.uk).
In order to be eligible to receive funding as a research partner organisation, **non-UK research organisations** will need to register with the Research Councils. To do this, please include a **letter of support from the Pro-Vice Chancellor for research (or equivalent authority) from each non-UK research partner organisation** in your proposal. This letter should summarise the organisation’s support for the project, confirm that they are able to meet the eligibility and assurance requirements identified in the table below, and agree to provide information to the Research Councils when requested. In the letter they should also provide a contact email address for any due diligence enquiries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to deliver</th>
<th>Governance and control</th>
<th>Financial stability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• provide evidence of a strong track record of maximising the wider impact and value of its research to the benefit of local economies and society;</td>
<td>• be a higher education organisation, public laboratory, or non-profit research intensive organisation;</td>
<td>• be permitted by their country’s government to receive funding from foreign sources;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• have a cohort of researchers (normally a minimum of 10) with sufficient capacity to deliver research and a demonstrated track record. This should include a significant number of publications in journals and/or monographs with key academic publishers, and/or other outputs that have been subject to peer review. Journal quality should take into account benchmark measures appropriate to the regional context and research disciplines;</td>
<td>• have a governing board with independent representation appointed to jointly oversee the management of the whole organisation;</td>
<td>• have a bank account that is in its legal name; and that can be reconciled to the finance management system;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• have a track record of staff, while employed at the organisation, leading or co-leading innovative research projects in the previous five years including, if applicable, directing postdoctoral researchers and/or research students; and</td>
<td>• have satisfactory processes for preventing, detecting, reporting and responding to allegations of fraud, bribery and corruption;</td>
<td>• have a basic finance management system that can be used to reconcile the bank account, to record all cash and payments ensuring that all transactions can be individually identified and provides suitable storage for supporting documentation; and</td>
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<tr>
<td>• have sufficient financial support for research at the organisational level to ensure the availability of essential infrastructure and the long-term sustainability of research activity, as evidenced by research project income across all projects totalling at least £100k pa over the previous three years.</td>
<td>• have satisfactory processes for the effective collection, management, analysis and dissemination of data;</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• have satisfactory procedures in place for making payments for per diem, travel advances or review of receipts and subsequent reimbursement of expenses for approved official travel.

| Sub-contract Management | • Ensure there is a policy in place to sufficiently manage sub-contractors including provisions for ensuring their compliance with Research Council terms and conditions. |

For organisations that are registered in multiple countries the capacity of the whole organisation may be factored into meeting the eligibility criteria as long as the overall research environment meets that criteria and that the organisation works in a joined up way, i.e., not fragmented research centres in different countries.

As part of RCUK funding assurance, research partner organisations may be requested to complete an RCUK Overseas Due Diligence Questionnaire. Please be aware that research partner organisations may be contacted by RCUK at any point during the expert review process. This is in order to expedite our assurance process. If we do contact any non-UK research partner organisation named on your outline proposal, the Lead organisation will be informed.

This process is for our assurance purposes and does not replace the due diligence requirements of the lead organisation. However, when obtaining information from non-UK research organisations we will request permission to share the information they provide to us with the lead organisation. The lead organisation can then use this information for their own due diligence processes should they wish.

Project partners – Participating organisations not meeting the criteria to be research partners can be project partners on the awards based on the following requirements:
• Third sector organisations - NGOs, charities and other non-profit civil society organisations (not meeting the minimum requirements for research partner organisations) can be included on proposals as project partners and are eligible to receive a contribution towards costs from the Hub award (see What can be Applied For?, Section 2).
• Government departments and business – Overseas and UK government departments and businesses should be engaged where appropriate but are not eligible to directly receive funds on the awards.

Sub-contracts – Sub-contracts are eligible costs on proposals submitted to this call but should only be used for the procurement of goods and services. Sub-contracts are not permitted for research partners providing intellectual input into the project, where a research partner or project partner relationship is more appropriate.

If you are unsure where an organisation fits within the above categories, please contact the Research Councils UK GCRF team for further guidance.

What can be applied for?
All UK costs will be supported at 80% fEC in-line with standard Research Council rules. Please note that all funds will be administered through the lead research organisation.

Individual items of equipment above £10,000 are not an eligible cost for this call. Small equipment and consumables may be requested where appropriate as long as individual items are below £10,000.

Capital or infrastructure expenditure is not an eligible cost for this call.
Fees and/or stipends associated with Masters and PhD studentships are not eligible under this call. Project specific travel and subsistence and research costs associated with students may be included.

**Funding Available for research partners organisations**

GCRF Hubs are intended to support partnerships with research partner organisations within the UK and globally. The funding for research partners will depend upon the country in which they are primarily based/legally registered, with the level of financial support determined by the countries DAC list status as summarised in the following table. All staff costs must be based on basic salaries (i.e. not day rates).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Partner Organisation Location</th>
<th>Direct Costs</th>
<th>Indirect (overheads and Institutional) costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Current fEC policy (80% direct &amp; indirect)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries, Chile, Uruguay, Seychelles</td>
<td>Up to 50% eligible costs</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC list countries</td>
<td>Up to 100% eligible costs</td>
<td>Up to 30% of eligible direct costs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applicants may apply for funds to cover the cost of overseas research staff to support research activities in partner countries. Overseas research staff may be locally recruited in the collaborating country, or recruited in the UK and based overseas. In cases where a researcher is recruited and employed by a UK-based institution but based overseas, costs will be paid at 80% fEC. Where a researcher is locally recruited and employed by an overseas institution to support the international co-investigator, these costs will be paid at 100%.

Organisations based in developed countries (i.e. countries not on the OECD DAC list) as well as Chile, Uruguay and Seychelles can be research partners, but are expected to cover the majority of their own research costs. The Hub award may contribute a maximum of 50% of their eligible direct research costs, with the remainder of the costs provided by the partner organisation or from other funding sources. These costs and contributions must be fully auditable. In the Standard proposal document on Je-S these costs should be entered as ‘exceptions’ and **50% of the total cost entered on the form**.

Funding for research partner organisations in OECD DAC list countries ([http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DAC_List_ODA_Recipients2014to2017_flows_En.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DAC_List_ODA_Recipients2014to2017_flows_En.pdf)) will include indirect costs as a contribution to institutional overheads, capacity strengthening and the research environment. Detailed guidance on which costs are eligible as direct and indirect costs can be found below.

The costs a multinational organisation can claim as a research partner pertain to the country the organisation’s headquarters are located in. For example, multilateral intergovernmental organisations such as the WHO are eligible to take part as research partners but are only eligible to claim up to 50% of the direct research costs as their headquarters are based in France and Switzerland respectively.

**Funding available for project partners**

Organisations that do not meet the minimum criteria to be research partners but offer valuable partnerships may be eligible to receive funds from the awards based on the following requirements:

- **Third sector organisations (e.g., NGOs, charities and other non-profit civil society organisations)** – These organisations are eligible to receive a modest contribution to their
costs on the project funded by the research councils at 100% of direct costs. These costs must not exceed 1 year FTE across the whole award (e.g., 20% of one post for five years or 25% of one post for 4 years) in staff costs per organisation. Any non-staff costs must be reasonable; indirect costs and overheads are not allowed. The total costs associated with all third-sector **project partners** must not exceed 10% of the total Hub award (100% fEC). All staff costs must be based on basic salaries (i.e. not day rates).

- **Government departments and business** – International and UK government departments and businesses where staff have significant intellectual input and contribute to the leadership of the proposal are not eligible to directly receive funds from the Hub award.

**Sub-contracts**

Costs for procurement of goods and services can be requested, including for businesses and government departments. Clarification from Research Councils UK should be sought at the application stage.

The costs for subcontractors are tied to the country managing the sub-contract. E.g., if a DAC list research partner organisation is managing a subcontract it will be awarded at 100%. If a UK partner is managing a subcontract it will be awarded at 80%. The most appropriate country should be chosen to manage the sub-contract based on the overall governance arrangements.

**Direct/Indirect costs for international research partners**

The rates of indirect costs that can be funded on the application by DAC-list country based research partners are up to 30% of the total direct costs incurred. These should cover those costs which would be considered as part of the cost of running an effective office or research institution. The following costs may not be included as direct costs for this call and therefore must be included in the requested indirect costs:

- Charges for office or laboratory space.
- Electricity, heating, lighting.
- Telephone and basic communication costs (unless there is need for significant project-based activities such as phone interviews).
- Routine photocopying and printing (Large print runs such as publications or workshop papers may be charged to the grant).
- Standard Office computing, including desktop and laptop computers and associated software. Individual items of computing equipment may not be charged to a grant (High performance computing facilities which are linked to a specific research task may in some circumstances be charged to the grant – for further clarification please check with RCUK).
- Office support staff (e.g. finance staff, basic secretarial support, computing support staff). Project managers can be claimed as a direct cost on the grant.
- Continuing Professional Development for staff.

Indirect costs should be fully justified in the justification of resources document (see [Justification of Resources](#) for more information).

**Collaboration agreements**

Applicants are not required to have collaboration agreements in place at the point of submission. Collaborations agreements must however be in place for all partners within 6
months of the start date, and prior to any cash-flow to the partner.

Collaboration agreements should include details on:
- Transparent budgets and payment schedules to each partner
- Roles and responsibilities of each partner, communication and leadership structure
- Description of the contribution of each partner to the project
- Authorship and use of findings including intellectual property
- Data management plan for accessing and sharing data by partners
- How the project will resolve any problems
- Adherence to the grant Terms and Conditions

**Naming convention for GCRF Hubs**

Each proposed Hub should be named the “GCRF X Hub”, where “X” describes the challenge area of focus in up to five words. This name should be comprehensible to the intelligent lay person and not contain acronyms, jargon or technical terms. Hub names should not include names of people or organisations.

Where appropriate the title for each Hub may change between the outline and full stages. RCUK will approve the names of each funded Hub and any associated branding.

**Submitting a full proposal**

Full proposals must be submitted via Je-S by **16:00 British Summer Time (BST) on 24th May 2018**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

All applicants who are to be named as the Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on the proposal need to have a fully registered (verified) Je-S account (Co-Investigator’s organisations do not need to be registered). These accounts must be set-up by the individual. **You should set up any additional Je-S accounts as soon as possible.**

https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/TermsConditions.aspx?mode=accountsetup

To submit a proposal, applicants should:

1. **Log in** to the Joint Electronic System (Je-S) https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx
2. Select the relevant **Council** (as indicated via the outline outcome email)
3. Select **Document Type**: Standard Proposal
4. Select **Scheme**: RCUK
5. Select **Call/Type/Mode**: Interdisciplinary Research Hubs Full Call (invitation only)
6. Click **Create Document**

**Applications submitted to the wrong call will not be accepted.**

In summary, each application must consist of the following documents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Maximum page length</th>
<th>Je-S attachment type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Standard proposal document</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case for Support</td>
<td>12 pages</td>
<td>Case for Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of Resources</td>
<td>4 pages</td>
<td>Justification of Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathways to Impact</td>
<td>3 pages</td>
<td>Pathways to Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODA compliance statement</td>
<td>1 page</td>
<td>Non-UK Component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data management plan</td>
<td>2 pages</td>
<td>Data management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplan</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 page</td>
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<tr>
<td>CVs for Principal Investigator and all Co-Investigators</td>
<td>2 pages per CV, including publications</td>
<td>CV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter of Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 pages per letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Partner Letters of Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 pages per letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animal research statement (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Additional questions on the use of rodents overseas” form (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal cover letter (optional)</td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assessment form (if applicable, see Annex 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 pages per form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No additional attachments are permitted.

As a minimum, font size 11 in Arial or other sans serif typeface of equivalent size to Arial font size 11 must be used for the entire Case for Support and CVs.

Please note that on submission all non PDF documents are converted to PDF. The use of non-standard fonts may result in errors or font conversion, which could affect the overall length of the document. Additionally where non-standard fonts are present, and even if the converted PDF document may look unaffected in the Je-S System, when it is imported into the Research Councils Grants System some information may be removed. We therefore recommend that where a document contains any non-standard fonts (scientific notation, diagrams etc), the document should be converted to PDF prior to attaching it to the proposal.

Applications not complying with the call requirements may be rejected.

**Standard proposal document**

In particular, please note the following:

**Entering applicants**
- All principal and co-investigators must have a fully registered Je-S account. Applicants that do not currently have a Je-S account type ‘Research Proposals’ should visit Je-S Home Page to create and submit an account request. These accounts must be set-up by the individual. Please ensure that you submit any account requests as soon as possible.
  [https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/TermsConditions.aspx?mode=account setup](https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/TermsConditions.aspx?mode=account setup)
- Please note that UK investigators (PI and Co-Is) require third party verification from their host research organisation, before the Standard proposal document can be submitted. Overseas Co-Is require ‘Research Proposal’ type Je-S accounts which may require verification by their organisation.

**Exceptions – UK costs**
- The following UK costs should be entered as ‘Other Directly Incurred costs’ and flagged as exceptions (to be paid at 100%):
  - Costs for externally contracted social surveys
  - Costs associated with NERC data centres

**Entering overseas costs**
- All overseas costs must be entered into the standard proposal document as Other
Directly Incurred costs and flagged as exceptions. As only one rate can be selected for exceptions, for overseas costs associated with non-UK developed countries please enter 50% of the required cost and flag as an exception.

- Non-UK Co-Is must enter their time allocation under ‘Directly Allocated’ but should enter the salary rate as zero. All costs associated with non-UK investigators - whether salary, fieldwork, equipment, indirect costs or travel and subsistence - will need to be entered under ‘Other Directly Incurred Costs’ in the Resources section of the form and the ‘Exceptions’ box will need to be ticked for each item.

- All overseas costs must be entered into the Other Directly Incurred costs using the following format: In the description box you should enter - ‘Organisation: Country: Cost Category: Cost Description. The cost categories for this call are as follows:
  - Staff
  - Other Directly Incurred Costs
  - Indirect Costs
  - Travel and Subsistence

E.g.
University of Nairobi: Kenya: Staff: 1 x PDRA
University of Nairobi: Kenya: Travel and Subsistence: 4 x flights
University of Nairobi: Kenya: Other Directly Incurred Costs: 5 x Workshops including catering and accommodation

**Entering facilities costs**
- If Research Council facilities (see Annex 1) are being used the requested costs should be included under ‘Other Directly Incurred costs’. Any facilities should be named, and the costs fully justified in the Justification of Resources. A technical assessment form must also be provided (attached as an ‘Other attachment’ in Je-S).

**Research ethics**
- Applicants should use the Ethical Information section to demonstrate to reviewers that they have fully considered any ethical issues concerning the material they intend to use, the nature and choice, current public perceptions and attitudes towards the subject matter or research area. Describing potential issues gives confidence to reviewers that the applicants have thought carefully about the project. The research councils will not fund a project if they believe that there are ethical concerns that have been overlooked or not appropriately accounted for. Each section of the ethical information must be completed. Applicants must ensure the proposed research will be carried out to a high ethical standard and must clearly state how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and will be addressed ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the project commences and all risks are minimised.

**Application summaries**
- The ‘Summary’ and ‘Impact Summary’ sections will be made available on the Gateway to Research database and research council websites, therefore applicants should ensure that these are written in plain English and any confidential information is not included in these sections.

Please note that typing into a text box is not detectable by the system and is regarded as system inactivity. Please remember to save text regularly.

Separate guidance on setting up Je-S accounts can be found on the call website, in addition full guidance on the Je-S system can be found via the Je-S help text. This is available in
every page of your Je-S form, simply click on the question mark against any section (or on the word ‘Help’ in the top right hand corner of each page).

For all Je-S system enquiries please contact the Je-S helpdesk (jeshelp@rcuk.ac.uk or 01793 444164)

**Case for Support**
The Case for Support should contain the following sections:

**Strategic rationale**
This section should clearly articulate the challenge(s) being addressed and how they will contribute to the realisation of the UN SDGs and/or the UK Aid Strategy. You should make a strategic case for why this scale of investment and activity is required, and clearly describe how the proposed Hub will compliment and add value to the global research landscape.

**Research vision and programme**
Describe the overarching vision, key research programmes and main work packages for the proposed Hub. This should include an articulation of:
- What is novel, innovative and timely about the proposed research/approaches;
- How the proposed programme will facilitate and promote collaborative and interdisciplinary ways of working; and
- How the proposed programme will underpin delivery against challenges previously defined as intractable.

For any flexible funding within your proposed Hub you should outline how this will be managed and administered.

**Capacity and capability of the team**
This section should outline the track record, knowledge and expertise of the team, including their proposed contribution to the programme; evidence they have the necessary diverse set of skills to deliver the vision and objectives; and demonstrate a clear capacity to conduct meaningful, well integrated and robust interdisciplinary research. You should also provide an overview of the relevant research environments.

**Capacity building and international partnerships**
Clearly articulate the strategy to enhance and build transparent, meaningful and lasting equitable partnerships of mutual benefit with researchers and other partners (including business, third sector organisations, and governments) in developing countries including how they have been engaged to date in the identification and prioritisation of challenges, and the design and implementation of the proposed approach.

Describe the plans to strengthen capacity and grow capability to address development challenges/the SDGs. The primary focus should be around building capacity in the relevant developing country(ies), as a consequence this may have a secondary benefit of increasing capability to deliver development research in the UK. This should include skills development across all career stages.

**Leadership and management**
Clearly articulate the proposed governance framework of the partnership. How will the governance framework ensure that the partnership is equitable, transparent and of mutual benefit to all parties? Areas to consider include the processes that the partnership will use to:
- Develop and agree research questions, research approaches and research methods
- Identify roles and responsibilities of partners
- Ensure transparency of budgets
• Ensure transparency of decision making processes.
• Share information including data and research outputs
• Determine how and when results and outputs are disseminated
• Determine authorship, conference attendance and interaction with stakeholders
• Manage ownership and control of products and specimens including data, results and intellectual property
• Manage and resolve conflict within the partnership
• Evaluate and monitor the health of the partnership

**Organisation, governance and evaluation**
This section should comprise of 3 parts:

**Part 1** – A description of the plan for the research and operational management of the proposed Hub, including the approach to financial and risk management, assurance and governance. Further guidance on the minimum requirements for governance and project management organisation are included in the guidance documents section of the call webpage.

**Part 2** - A 1 page draft theory of change providing a high level summary of the initial plans and expectations. This should be in diagrammatic form. Guidance for developing a theory of change is included in the guidance documents section of the call webpage.

Successful awards will need to provide a finalised theory of change along with a log frame and more detailed evaluation and monitoring plan within 6 month of the start date.

**Part 3** – A monitoring and evaluation framework. This should address the following questions:

• How the project’s monitoring and evaluation be managed in terms of governance and broader project management?
• With reference to your theory of change, explain the main components of the monitoring and evaluation for the project. This section should account for:
  o how progress will be identified and monitored;
  o how research impact against relevant challenge will areas be measured;
  o how work in other key areas, such as capacity building and equitable partnership, will be tracked;
  o how attribution will be demonstrated.

**Justification of Resources**
All resources requested (directly incurred, directly allocated and exceptions, including PI and Co-I time) must be fully justified. If using Research Council facilities, please name them and provide a full justification for these costs.

For items that would ordinarily be found in a department, for example non-specialist computers, a justification must be included both for why they are required for the project and why they cannot be provided from the Research Organisation’s own resources (including funding from indirect costs from grants).

A clear justification must be provided for the amount of indirect costs requested for international research partners and a breakdown given for how it will be spent. Costs eligible to be claimed as indirect costs are outlined in the ‘What can be applied for’ section (Section 2).

In addition a table providing a brief summary of the organisational contributions from each organisation involved in the Hub should be provided. It is suggested that this comprises no more than 1 page of the Justification of Resources.
Pathways to Impact

The Pathways to Impact document should explain the programme’s strategy for engagement with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the potential beneficial impacts of the research are realised. It should provide timelines and milestones for grant specific activities which will contribute to the delivery of a breadth of significant and measurable impacts both within the lifetime of the award and beyond. Proposals should demonstrate understanding of the societal and cultural context of the research and its potential influence on the ability to deliver ODA impact in the country(ies) in question.

You should also outline the approaches taken to ensure that the proposed Hub offers a sustainable programme with the potential for legacy beyond the initial investment. This should include a description of the steps taken ensure that partnerships, resources, capacity and capability are sustained and strengthened beyond the lifetime of the award, and the strategy to leverage additional activity, impact and financial/in-kind contributions (including from the private sector).

Further guidance is available at www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impacts

ODA compliance statement

Please note that this attachment is called 'Non-UK component' on Je-S.

The ODA compliance statement should be one side and explicitly demonstrate how the proposal meets key ODA requirements. It must answer the following three questions in order:
1. Which country/countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal?
2. How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries?
3. How do you expect that the outcome of your proposed activities will promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list?

Particularly in the case of broad challenges affect a number of countries, applicants must explicitly identify aspects of these broader challenges which are particular to the partner country(ies) they are working with, as well as specific benefits in the target country(ies).

Further guidance on ODA compliance is included in the guidance documents section of the call webpage.

Data management plan

RCUK recognises that plans for sharing data will vary according to the type of data collected. Data sharing should be driven by scientific benefit and should also be cost effective. Data should be shared using established standards and existing resources where this is possible.

Applicants should include details of:
- **Data areas and data types** – the volume, type and content of data that will be generated, e.g. experimental measurements, models, records and images
- **Standards and metadata** – the standards and methodologies that will be adopted for data collection and management and why these have been selected
- **Relationship to other data available in public repositories**
- **Secondary use** – further intended and/or foreseeable research uses for the completed dataset(s)
- **Methods for data sharing** – planned mechanisms for making these data available, e.g. through deposition in existing public databases or on request, including access mechanisms where appropriate
- **Proprietary data** – any restrictions on data sharing due to the need to protect proprietary or patentable data
- **Timeframes** – timescales for public release of data
- **Format of the final dataset**

If your Hub will produce environmental science NERC relevant data, then you must work with the relevant NERC Data Centre(s) to cost this as part of your proposal, and enter it as an ‘Other Directly Incurred cost’. [http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/data/](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/data/). These costs should be flagged as an exception and will be awarded at 100%.

**Workplan**
This should be a standalone document and it cannot be used to extend the case for support. Project-specific timelines and milestones should be clearly and accurately shown. Use of a Gantt chart focusing on the visual diagram with minimal text is recommended.

**CVs**
CVs should be included for the Principal Investigator and all Co-Investigators. Each CV should be no more than 2 pages (including publications).

**Letters of Support**
Please attach letters from **all research partner organisations** (UK and overseas) involved including international partners, signed by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (or equivalent). The letter should summarise the organisation’s support for the project, confirm that they are able to meet the eligibility and assurance requirements identified on pages 6-7, and agree to provide information to the Research Councils when requested. A contact email address for any due diligence enquiries should also be included.

**Project Partner Letters of Support**
Letters of support are also required from all project partners involved in the proposal and listed on the Je-S form. These should:
- confirm their rationale for support for the programme and describe how they have been involved in the preparation of the proposal
- confirm any contribution of cash and in-kind support
- show an outline of their intended involvement during the lifetime of the programme and be dated and on headed paper, making clear the role of the signatory in the stakeholder organisation

**Animal research statement (if applicable) (attached as a Letter of Support in Je-S)**
In addition to completing the animal usage section on Je-S, if your proposal involves the use of animals, you must submit a signed statement (attached as a Letter of Support to the Je-S Standard Proposal). This should be a single statement from both UK and overseas PIs that:
- they will adhere to all relevant national and local regulatory systems in the UK and overseas.
- they will follow the guidelines laid out in the [www.nc3rs.org.uk/responsibility-use-animals-bioscience-research](http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/responsibility-use-animals-bioscience-research) document and ensure that work is carried out to UK standards.
- before initiation of the proposed research work, appropriate approvals from institutional and/or central animal ethics committees will be obtained for experimental protocols to be adopted in their projects. (Successful proposals may be expected to provide copies of these permissions before funding is released.)
- details where the animal research will take place (UK or overseas) and through which funder the resources are being sought.

“**Additional questions on the use of rodents overseas**” form (if applicable) (attached as
a Letter of Support in Je-S)
If the research involves the use of rodents overseas rather than in the UK, please also complete the “Additional questions on the use of rodents overseas” form (included in the guidance documents section of the call webpage), and attach as a Letter of Support.

Covering letter (optional)
Within the covering letter you may wish to reference any significant updates or changes to the proposal since the outline stage for example the addition of new Co-Investigators or partners. You may also wish to refer to any specific changes implemented to address points of feedback from the outline Panels.

Technical assessment form (if applicable) (attached as an ‘Other attachment’ in Je-S)
Technical assessment forms must be provided for all facility costs requested for any facilities listed in Annex 1.

Prior to submitting a proposal, applicants wishing to use any facilities in Annex 1 must contact the facility to seek agreement that they could provide the service required. You must obtain a ‘Technical Assessment’ form completed by the service provider, which should be attached in Je-S as an ‘Other attachment’. The technical assessment is required to detail the outline discussions that have taken place with the research facility, to ensure the facility will be available to you at the required time. Please also confirm the start and end date of use of the facility, support requirements and a brief summary of the facilities use and importance of their use for the project. Please include any other information you consider relevant.

The costs for the service or facility must be included within the Directly Incurred Other Costs section of the standard proposal on Je-S, and counts towards the funding limits of the proposal.

High Performance Computing: ARCHER and NEXCS. Applicants should submit a quote for HPC only when use in any one year exceeds 160 MAU, otherwise costs are not required.

For the STFC large-scale facilities i.e CLF, Diamond, ESRF, ILL and ISIS, which are free at the point of access, a quote is not required.

Please be aware that the costing process can take over 2 months, so any requests need to be submitted as soon as possible.

Further information on facilities can be found here:
www.bbsrc.ac.uk/research/facilities/
www.epsrc.ac.uk/research/facilities/
www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/facilities/apply/
www.stfccareers.co.uk/location-facilities/

3. Assessment procedure

Full stage assessment process
The purpose of the assessment at the full stage is to:
• ensure alignment to the aims of this call
• ensure alignment with ODA expectations
• facilitate a strong portfolio of awarded Hubs across a spectrum of challenges, approaches and disciplines

Proposals submitted by the deadline will be considered by one or more multi-disciplinary international expert review panel with representation from across academia and other
stakeholder groups and assessed against the below criteria. Decision will be final and will not be open to appeal.

**Full stage assessment criteria**
Invited full proposals will be assessed using the following criteria. All criteria are equally important.

**Strategic rationale**
- Is the proposed Hub challenge-led and impact-focused, identifying a key research need?
- Is the scale of investment and activity justified by the size and persistence of the identified challenge(s)?
- Have the applicants made the strategic case for how the proposed Hub will add value in a global context?

**Research excellence**
- Is the proposed research novel, innovative and timely?
- Does the research programme offer a well-integrated and interdisciplinary approach?
- Does the proposed research meet the highest international standards and is it likely to advance the field?

**Capability and interdisciplinary research team**
- Does the proposed team have the appropriate track record, knowledge and expertise?
- Have the appropriate range of disciplines been identified and is the team well integrated?
- Does the whole team have access to appropriate preliminary data, resources, tools, and technology to undertake the proposed research?

**Capacity building and international partnerships**
- To what extent have appropriate developing country partners (including researchers, practitioners and policy makers) played a leading role in challenge identification and the design and implementation of the proposed approach?
- Does this proposal identify an appropriate range of relevant partners, and are these partnerships authentic, equitable and sustainable beyond the initial award?
- To what extent will the Hub develop new or enhanced research capacity for addressing development challenges/the SDGs in the relevant partner countries?

**Likelihood and pathways to impact**
- Does the proposed Hub identify realistic pathways with the potential to deliver a breadth of significant and measurable impacts?
- Have the applicants taken into consideration the relevant in-country context and demonstrated local appetite and capacity to implement solutions?
- Does the proposed Hub offer a sustainable programme with the potential to leverage activity, impact and financial/in-kind contributions (including from the private sector)?
- Will the partnerships, resources, capacity and capability developed through the Hub be sustained and strengthened beyond the end of the award?

**Leadership and management**
- Does the leadership team demonstrate the appropriate skills and experience to deliver the proposed vision and effectively manage the proposed Hub?
- Is there an appropriate balance of leadership and management between the partners, including an appropriate balance between developed and developing country partners?
- Does the framework demonstrate flexibility to adapt over the lifetime of the award and respond with agility to opportunities arising over the lifetime of the award?

**Organisation, governance and evaluation**
- Does the proposal describe an appropriate plan for the research and operational management of the proposed Hub (including financial and risk management, assurance and governance)?
- Does the proposal outline an appropriate framework for monitoring and evaluation, and identify a robust set of deliverables, indicators and measurables for success?

**Ethics**
- Are the proposed partnerships ethical and equitable?
- Have the applicants identified the ethical implications arising from the proposed research and provided sufficient detail of how these will be addressed?
- Where appropriate, does the proposal provide sufficient details of procedures involving human subjects or vertebrate animals?

**Value for money**
- Are the requested costs appropriate and justified?
- Are there appropriate processes and controls to ensure due diligence and assurance are in place?

**Feedback**
RCUK will provide general feedback and observations to all applicants following the full assessment stage. In addition those applicants invited to interview will be provided with additional individual feedback.

**Interview stage**
Interviews for invited proposals will be held on the 3rd and 4th October. This will provide applicants with an opportunity to present and answer questions about their proposal. Applicants will be informed as to whether their proposal is invited to interview as soon as possible following the sift panel.

If invited to interview each proposal will receive project specific feedback from the sift panel to aid in preparation for the interview. Applicants will be invited to send up to five people in total from the leadership team to the interview including the PI and anyone who might be joining the interview via video-conference.

Further guidance will be provided to the relevant applicants in due course.

**The Hubs portfolio**
RCUK wishes to establish a strong portfolio of Hubs, which address a broad range of development challenges, incorporating different approaches, disciplines, and contexts. The final funding decisions will give consideration to the need for balance and diversity within this portfolio.

RCUK will not support multiple Hubs aiming to address similar research challenges.

### 4. Key dates

<p>| Outline proposal outcomes announced | January/February 2018 |
| Call for full proposals opens (invite only) | 15th February 2018 |
| Applicants’ event | 27th March 2018 |
| Call for full proposals closes | 24th May 2018 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full proposal sift panel</td>
<td>5th – 6th September 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full proposal interview panel</td>
<td>3rd – 4th October 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full proposal outcomes announced</td>
<td>November 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful awards start</td>
<td>1st December 2018</td>
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</table>

5. Contacts

All queries about this call should be submitted to gcrf@rcuk.ac.uk

Sian Rowland
Senior Policy Manager – Global Challenges Research Fund
01793 444014

For all Je-S system enquiries please contact the Je-S helpdesk
jeshelp@rcuk.ac.uk
01793 444164

Change Log

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sian Rowland</td>
<td>15/02/2018</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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</table>
Annex 1 – List of facilities for which a quote is mandatory

NERC Airborne Research and Survey Facility (NARF)
ARCHER
Atmospheric Measurement Facility
Argon Isotope Facility (AIF)
Chilbolton Facility for Atmospheric and Radio Research (CFARR)
Cosmogenic Isotope Analysis Facility (CIAF)
Culture Collection of Algae & Protozoa (CCAP)
Earlham Institute
EPSRC National Service for AC-STEM
EPSRC National Service for iii-v Technologies
EPSRC National Service for Solid State NMR
EPSRC National Service for X-ray Photoelectron Spectroscopy
EPSRC National Wave Testing Service
European Incoherent Scatter Radar Facility (EISCAT)
Facility for Airborne Atmospheric Measurements (FAAM)
Field Spectroscopy Facility
Geophysical Equipment Facility (GEF) -
Ion Beam Centre at University of Surrey
Ion Microprobe Facility (IMF)
Life Sciences Mass Spectrometry Facility,
Mesosphere, Stratosphere And Troposphere Radar (MSTRF)
National Marine Facilities
National Wind Tunnel Facility
NERC Biomolecular Analysis Facility (NBAF)
NERC Earth Observation Data Acquisition and Analysis Service, (NEODAAS)
NERC Isotope Geosciences Laboratory
NERC Radiocarbon Facility
NEXCS
Research Data Facility (RDF)
Space Geodesy Facility
Additional questions on the use of rodents overseas

If the proposed research involves the use of rodents overseas rather than in the UK, please complete this form and attach it to your proposal in Je-S as a Letter of Support.

The expectations of the Research Councils for the use of animals in research are set out in the document ‘Responsibility in the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research’. Compliance with the principles in this document is a condition of receiving funding.

Please confirm the following: (yes/no)

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The enclosure sizes and space allocations meet or exceed those in Annex VII to Directive 2010/63/EU (Tables 1.1 to 1.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The rodents are provided with: a) substrate/bedding on a solid floor; b) a shelter and/or nesting material for refuge and to help regulate body temperature and light exposure; c) chew blocks or other gnawing material.</td>
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<td>3. The rodents are housed socially. Exceptions to this must be justified below.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Appropriate, contemporary anaesthesia and/or analgesia is provided to minimise pain and distress. Any withholding of pain relief during painful procedures must be justified below.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Surgery is performed using aseptic technique, the least invasive surgical approaches, and appropriate perioperative care (pre-operative medications, hypothermic prevention, ophthalmic protection, nursing care where required).</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Toe clipping and/or tail biopsy are not used for identification or genotyping purposes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Where genotypes are known to be harmful, animals of that type are not produced unless required scientifically (e.g. if homozygous null is harmful and heterozygotes are desired, then heterozygous is crossed with wild type, not another heterozygous animal).</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Where new GA strains are being generated, best knowledge will be applied to predict potential harmful outcomes and the animals will be monitored closely for emerging phenotypes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. The rodents are monitored with a frequency appropriate to keep pain and distress to a minimum, using appropriate, tailored welfare indicators and score sheets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Humane endpoints have been established for each experiment with the potential to cause moderate or severe harm, after consultation with the veterinarian and animal care staff, and implementation of these is recorded during the experiment. (Note the humane endpoint criteria may be requested by the Research Councils).</td>
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<td>11. The methods of humane killing are those recommended by the AVMA (2013) or permitted under Directive 2010/63/EU.</td>
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Where there are deviations from the above, please explain below: (free text; one side of A4)
Due Diligence

Guidance for Research Organisations

Background

The following has been put together to provide guidance on due diligence requirements when undertaking research in partnership with overseas research organisations. It is not intended to set rigid rules, but to enable Research Organisations to develop their own policies and processes which are commensurate with their risk appetite and the type of research being undertaken.

The risks relating to funding going overseas are much greater than for funding going to UK Research Organisations that undergo stringent audit checks. Due diligence provides a way to mitigate the risks, share good practice and have assurance that Research Organisations have the capacity and expertise to carry out the research. However, different organisations come with different risks and it is up to the lead Research Organisation to set their risk appetite. Most Research Organisations use a combination of the level of funding and the corruption level of the country the organisation is based in as the measure of what their risk appetite will be.

In August 2017, the following was added to the RCUK Grant Terms and Conditions:
The Research Organisation shall ensure that it carries out appropriate due diligence on any third parties used to deliver any part of the work funded by the grant and shall ensure in particular, that activities carried out by such third parties comply with these terms and conditions. The Research Organisation shall provide the Research Council on request with details of expenditure of the Grant by any third party.

UKRI require Research Organisations that are involved in partnering with overseas organisations to have policies and processes in place regarding due diligence and to carry out the process using a risk-based approach. Research Organisations will be asked to evidence this as part of the UKRI funding assurance process and as part of the awarding process for calls such as GCRF.

It is not expected that Research Organisations will carry out the same level of due diligence checks for £2k of funding being distributed as they would for £200k. The level of due diligence should be commensurate with the risk. As a minimum, Research Organisations should carry out checks listed in Step One below on all third parties they are funding. They should take into account the impact on the lead Research Organisation should anything occur with the third party organisation versus the cost of taking steps to mitigate the risk.

The Pillars

Due diligence should cover the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance and Control</th>
<th>Ability to Deliver</th>
<th>Financial Stability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Past Performance</td>
<td>Financial viability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud, bribery, corruption, money laundering and slavery</td>
<td>Staff capacity and capability (number, track record)</td>
<td>Financial Management eg experience of finance team and segregation of duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal controls</td>
<td>Infrastructure and programme management for research</td>
<td>Strength of audit, internal and external</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Management</td>
<td>Monitoring and management</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Policies, procedures and systems – inc IT systems</td>
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</table>
Steps to take

Step One

1. Get academics to let you know as early as possible about any overseas Research Organisations they are considering working with.
2. Early checks:
   a. Speak to other colleagues both within and outside your organisation to see what their experiences have been. This may raise red flags at an early stage or indicate that the organisation has been a good partner to work with previously.
   b. Carry out an online search on the organisation, both their official web site and for any news stories. This should provide an indication of the activities at the organisation and any good or bad news stories. It will also reveal details of any other projects the organisation has been involved in and therefore indicate whether they have the capacity to carry out the required research.
   c. Check the corruption index for the country the organisation is based in. This can be found at [https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016](https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016) and provides a useful indication of the level of corruption within the country concerned and therefore may increase the levels of risk regarding funding going to organisations within these countries.
3. If the above checks result in any major concerns, you may wish to consider looking for a different organisation to partner with.

Step Two

Once the academic has chosen which partners they are looking to work with, you should look at carrying out more detailed checks. UKRI have developed a Due Diligence Questionnaire which they use to carry out due diligence when funding is going directly to an overseas organisation. This is an evolving document, but can be used as a starting point for any local process. This can be found at Appendix A.

It covers the following key areas:
1. Legal status of the organisation
2. Governance and Control
3. Ability to deliver
4. Financial stability
5. Sub-contract management

This process can take a long time to complete, but must be completed before the start date of the grant. However, research organisations may be asked to evidence due diligence as part of the
awarding process, so should be able to show what checks they have or plan to carry out on the organisation concerned.

**Step Three**

Once gathered, due diligence information should be reviewed by the most appropriate non-conflicted people within your organisation (ie not the PI or other people directly involved in the project). In the first instance this is likely to consist of research office and/or finance staff with a clear escalation route should any issues be highlighted.

If any major issues are highlighted through this process, the lead Research Organisation should ensure that any decision to proceed/mitigate risks should be made by the relevant people with the required level of authority within their organisation. This can be done in a variety of ways, but several UK research organisations convene a panel consisting of staff from the research office, finance and the grant holder to make the final decision.

**Step Four**

Due Diligence should not stop once the award has been made. Research Organisations should have policies and processes regarding the transfer of funds to overseas organisations eg on receipt of invoice/proof of purchase etc. They may also wish to impose further checks for high risk organisations.

Once due diligence is carried out, if the Research Organisation continues to partner with the overseas organisation, either as part of the same project or other projects, the due diligence process should be repeated on a revolving basis eg every three years or if there are any issues or material changes with the overseas research organisation.

**Other sources of information**

Several UK Research Organisations also check Dunn and Bradstreet reports as part of their due diligence process to check details such as the registered address, governance etc.

Check the websites of other UK Research Organisations to see what other organisations are doing in the space and what guidance they are issuing to their academics etc.

Pam Hicks
Funding Assurance Consultant (GCRF)
November 2018
Contact: pamela.hicks@bbsrc.ukri.org
APPENDIX A

UK Research and Innovation International Due Diligence Questionnaire

This form is for the use of international organisations seeking eligibility for direct funding from one or more Research Councils.

All applicants should fully complete the form, and submit additional attachments, in English.

Please complete the form as comprehensively as possible. You will be contacted by a member of UKRI staff for clarification if necessary, which is likely to cause significant delays to your grant application.

This form is made up of the following sections, all of which should be completed by the applicant:
• Summary
• Questionnaire
• Document checklist
• Authorisation

Summary

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organisation name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of organisation</td>
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<td>Postal address</td>
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<tr>
<td>Head of organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and contact details of main contact person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Section 1: Governance and internal control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Area to be assessed</th>
<th>Document required</th>
<th>Applicant responses and comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Governance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>What is the legal status of the organisation?</td>
<td>Copy of registration/incorporation certificate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Does the organisation have in place a fully functioning non-executive Board, separate from executive management?</td>
<td>Organogram for the organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Policies &amp; procedures</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Please confirm whether or not the organisation has the following:</td>
<td>Copy of existing policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Anti-fraud, corruption &amp; bribery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Whistleblowing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Travel &amp; subsistence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv. Conflict of interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>What is the process for reviewing each of these policies and how often are they reviewed?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>How are staff made aware of each of these policies?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Do you have a risk management policy, and do you maintain a risk register?</td>
<td>Risk management policy</td>
<td>Risk register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, please describe who is responsible for updating the risk register and frequency of review.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Safeguarding &amp; Ethics</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Does the organisation have a formal child and vulnerable adults safeguarding policy?</td>
<td>Copies of relevant safeguarding policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>How are any policies disseminated among staff? Do staff receive training where relevant to their role?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>Does your organisation (and all subcontractors) have documented labour standards, and operate in line with the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015?</td>
<td>Copies of relevant policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In particular how does your organisation ensure that your employees and those in your supply chains are not subject to exploitation through: - Slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour - Sexual exploitation - Organ donorship - Force, threats or deception - By virtue of them being a child or other vulnerable person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>Describe how ethical standards of research are maintained within the organisation.</td>
<td>Copies or relevant ethics and scientific misconduct policies</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Particular instances of risk**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Has there been any reported cases of fraud in the past five years? If so how was it managed and how was the incident resolved?</td>
<td>Any fraud investigation reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Section 2:- Ability to deliver**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Area to be assessed</th>
<th>Document required</th>
<th>Applicant responses and comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science delivery and impact</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Please provide a full assessment of whether a minimum of 10 researchers have a significant number of publications in top quality journals and/or monographs with key academic publishers, and/or other outputs that have been subject to the highest standards of peer review.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Please provide a brief outline of the 3 biggest projects you are currently or were recently working on in the capacity of lead or co-lead.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Please provide evidence of where you have maximized the wider impact and value of research for the benefit of local economies and/or societies.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grant administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>How is research grant administration organised within the university?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who has overall responsibility for the management of research grants?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5 Describe the structure of the finance team who will be supporting this project.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.6 How is project expenditure authorised, processed and paid, and who is responsible at each stage?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 How is expenditure on research grants monitored?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Are you able to provide quarterly detailed transaction listings for all expenditure incurred using grant funds, and scanned receipts for all transactions (if required)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 How will staff hours worked on research grants be tracked to ensure staff have worked as stated on grant applications?</td>
<td>Copy of timesheet where relevant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Section 3: Financial Stability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Area to be assessed</th>
<th>Document required</th>
<th>Applicant responses and comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Financial viability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Please provide the following information about your total research income along with supporting accounts for the past 3 years</td>
<td>Past three years audited accounts</td>
<td>Financial year Total income Total research income % research vs total income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latest audit management letter</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>How would any deficit within the organisation be managed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Is the organisation experiencing a period of financial growth or decline?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial management**

| 3.4 | Does the organisation have a financial management procedures manual which clearly sets out accounting, reporting, internal control, and administrative tasks? |
|     | Copy of the latest financial manual |

| 3.5 | Does the organisation have a bank account with a reputable bank, held in the organisation's name, which can receive grant funds in GBP? |
|     | Bank ‘Letter of Good Standing’ for this account confirming account holder and account details |

| 3.6 | Does your government require you to hold a license or comply with certain regulations in order to receive funding from international sources? |
|     | If yes, please confirm whether you hold such a license, a summary of what this entitles you to do, and the period the license is valid for. |
|     | Copy of any relevant license and additional information |

**Strength of audit**

| 3.7 | Are your organisation’s annual financial statements audited by an external auditor? |
|     | Who are your external auditors, and who do they report to? |
### Section 4: Sub-contract management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Area to be assessed</th>
<th>Document required</th>
<th>Applicant responses and comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Due diligence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Please identify your intended sub-contractors and how much funding will be disbursed to each partner.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>What is your relationship to these organisations, and how were they identified as sub-contractors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Do you undertake due diligence on your sub-contractors to assess their ability and suitability to undertake the work required?</td>
<td>Copy of due diligence on relevant partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management frameworks/contracts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>How is the relationship with sub-contractors managed, for instance do you put in place a contract or memorandum of understanding?</td>
<td>Copy of agreements or sample documents if current agreements have not yet been completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Monitoring and management

| 4.5 | What financial reporting arrangements have been agreed with sub-contractors to ensure your organization has sufficient control of expenditure? |
| 4.6 | What arrangements do you have in place to monitor the progress sub-contractors are making on the project? | Examples of any monitoring documents or financial reports |

### Document checklist

Please complete this table to indicate whether you have included the documentation required as part of this assessment.

If you are not able to supply certain documents (for instance a policy not in existence in your organisation) please indicate why this is the case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Enclosed</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of legal status</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organogram</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-fraud, corruption &amp; bribery policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whistleblowing policy</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel &amp; subsistence policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict of interest policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk management policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk register</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding policy</td>
<td>Policies relevant to Modern Day Slavery</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics/ scientific misconduct policies</td>
<td>Fraud investigation reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timesheet</td>
<td>Last 3 years audited accounts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latest audit management letter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial manual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bank ‘Letter of Good Standing’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>License to receive international funding (if relevant)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most recent internal audit report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internal audit report on grant management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Due diligence on sub-contractors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MOUs/ contracts with sub-contractors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Examples of sub-contractor monitoring documents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Declaration

All research grants are subject to UKRI Terms and Conditions. If for any reason you cannot adhere to any of the conditions, please state which ones and the reason why below.

The information you have provided will be shared with other research organisations and funders, if for any reason you cannot comply with this please give further details below.

The information provided in this questionnaire should be a true representation of your organisation. If false information has been provided there is a chance this will affect your funding going forwards.

To confirm the above please sign below.

Signed  ..............................................................................................

Date    ..............................................................................................

Position ..............................................................................................
Organisation and governance guidance

This guidance provides a summary of the expected minimum requirements for full proposals submitted to the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) call for Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries.

1. Governance
Full proposals are required to provide a governance plan outlining a governance structure for the Hub which meets the minimum requirements but is not overly complex, e.g., one advisory board with a broad representation of stakeholders as opposed to multiple advisory boards. The detailed governance arrangements should be appropriate for the specific proposal but the below features must be met as a minimum:

Executive Group
Each award should have an Executive group with the following essential features:
- Forms the primary management group for the award
- Is responsible for plans, policies, responsibilities and key decisions
- Has ownership of project risks
- Has the PI as Chair accountable for the award
- Includes representation from across the partnership

Advisory Group
Each award should also have an overarching advisory group with the following essential features:
- Provides advice to the PI/Executive group regarding strategy and progress
- Oversees the project risks
- Has an independent, authoritative Chair
- Includes representation from key stakeholders
- Includes a Research Council/UKRI observer (to be arranged post-award)
- Includes the PI from another Hub (to be arranged post-award)

2. Project management organisation (PMO)
Within the full proposal, applicants are required to describe the project management organisation (PMO), i.e. the way project management will be organised for the Hub. The PMO should fulfil the following minimum requirements:
- Project/work stream initiation and delivery
- Monitoring, evaluation and impact tracking
- Financial monitoring and controls
- Risk management, including financial, project, reputational and legal risks
- Plan to manage distributed work streams
- Integration and coordination with other GCRF projects
- Communications management
- Data management
- Compliance with ethics frameworks
- Compliance of the Hub (including the flexible fund) with Official Development Assistance (ODA) rules and regulations as set out by the OECD.
- Regular engagement with the UKRI GCRF and Assurance Teams and relevant Research Council colleagues

Full proposals are required to provide a breakdown and justification of all PMO costs, including the roles and responsibilities of any management staff.
3. Due Diligence and assurance

Prior to approval of successful awards, applicants may be required to identify their approach to due diligence and what will be done to ensure financial assurance both during and at the end of the grant.
Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries

Guidance for developing a theory of change

What is a theory of change and why is it useful?

Designing a theory of change helps you to articulate the need you are addressing in your project, the changes you will make to address this need and what you plan to do to make these changes. Importantly, mapping these pathways will also help to flag up any assumptions or enablers in your work, highlighting risks, opportunities and potential challenges.

In terms of evaluation, a theory of change helps you to identify what should be measured and how you can draw upon existing evidence in the field to carry out your evaluation and demonstrate attribution.

There are a range of options available when it comes to selecting a model for your theory of change. The model proposed below is fairly simple and straightforward in its structure, making it appropriate for use in most projects, and provides a level of detail which meets the requirements of this stage in the application process. Applicants are not, however, obliged to use this model; if there is a theory of change model which better represents their project, they should include this in their application.

What are we looking for?

The purpose of the theory of change at this stage in the application process is to demonstrate that you have carefully considered the outcome pathways for your project, and how you will manage any complexities around these. The theory of change you submit should comprise of two parts:

1. A theory of change: a diagram mapping the key outcome pathways for your project. This should be a high-level visualisation, covering one A4 side.
2. A written narrative on the pathways set out in the diagram: this should focus on the assumptions and enablers underpinning your project’s outcome pathways, and key opportunities and risks with a description of how these will be addressed.

Developing your theory of change

1. Identify your long-term impact(s)
The long-term impact(s) for your project can be described as the final goal of your project, or the main change that you intend to make for those benefitting from your research. Long-term impacts should be high-level, and you should only have a small number of them, three or four maximum. They are often indirectly attributable to your research.
2. **Identify the preceding stages on your outcomes pathway**

Having identified your long-term impacts(s), it will be easier to work backwards and add detail to the key stages in your project. In this model, the preceding stages are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>The medium-term, usually both direct and indirect, consequences of your work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outputs</strong></td>
<td>The short-term, usually direct consequences of your work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td>The work carried out in the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inputs</strong></td>
<td>Resources in the broadest sense (financial, people, institutional, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Connect the stages together to demonstrate causality**

This is a key stage in the development of your theory of change, as it encourages you to think about how you get from one stage to the next, and what the challenges and opportunities on this pathway may be. It is useful to ask yourself the following questions at this stage:

- What assumptions are underpinning this causal link?
- What enablers will be required for this causal link to happen?

**Further guidance**

The guidance here is sufficient for applicants to develop a theory of change meeting the requirements of this stage of the application process. However, should applicants want further information, the following sources are useful:

- Ellen Harries, Lindsay Hodgson and James Noble (2014) *Creating your Theory of Change: NPC’s practical guide*
- Isabel Vogel (2012), *Review of the use of ‘Theory of Change’ in international development*
Official Development Assistance
Global Challenges Research Fund Guidance

- The following text has been developed in consultation with the Department for International Development to provide general guidance on ODA compliance to applicants for Global Challenges Research Fund grants.
- It is intended as general guidance only and is not officially endorsed by the OECD.

The Global Challenges Research Fund

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a £1.5 billion fund announced by the UK Government to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries. The Fund forms part of the UK’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment which is monitored by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). ODA funded activity focuses on outcomes that promote the long-term sustainable growth of countries on the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list and is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective. The Fund is being administered by delivery partners including, the four national academies and the UK Research Councils:

- Academy of Medical Sciences
- British Academy
- Royal Academy of Engineering
- Royal Society
- Arts and Humanities Research Council
- Biotechnology and Biosciences Research Council
- Economic and Social Research Council
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
- Medical Research Council
- Natural Environment Research Council
- Science and Technology Facilities Council
- Research Councils UK

This guidance has been prepared jointly with all primary delivery partners¹ and all applications under this programme must therefore be compliant with these guidelines.

¹ The Academy of Medical Sciences are currently not offering grants through the GCRF but as a delivery partner endorse this guidance.
Overall principle of ODA

‘Is it ODA?’ (http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/34086975.pdf) states that:

“ODA is defined as those flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions which are:

- provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and
- each transaction of which:
  a. is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and
  b. is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25% (discounted at a rate of 10%)."

All GCRF awards made by the delivery partners automatically comply with the first bullet and (b). Applicants need to ensure that (a) is met by the proposal they are writing and the resultant activity.

DAC List of ODA Recipients

The DAC List of ODA Recipients shows all countries and territories eligible to receive official development assistance (ODA). These consist of all low and middle income countries based on gross national income (GNI) per capita as published by the World Bank.

The DAC revises the list every three years. Countries that have exceeded the high-income threshold for three consecutive years at the time of the review are removed. The next review of the DAC List will take place in 2017.

ODA compliant research activities

The OECD defines ODA compliant research activities as follows:

“Research includes financing by the official sector, whether in the donor country or elsewhere, of research into the problems of developing countries. This may be either (i) undertaken by an agency or institution whose main purpose is to promote the economic growth or welfare of developing countries, or (ii) commissioned or approved, and financed or part-financed, by an official body from a general purpose institution with the specific aim of promoting the economic growth or welfare of developing countries. Research undertaken as part of the formulation of aid programmes in central or local government departments or aid agencies is considered as an administrative cost.” (DAC Statistical Reporting Directives, http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/38429349.pdf, 51.iv)

In addition the OECD further specifies the following in relation to ODA compliant research:

“Only research directly and primarily relevant to the problems of developing countries may be counted as ODA. This includes research into tropical diseases and developing crops designed for developing country conditions. The costs may still be counted as ODA if the research is carried out in a developed country.” (Is it ODA? http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/34086975.pdf)

2 Analysis by the Department for International Development (DfID) indicates that Uruguay, Chile & Antigua and Barbuda are likely to graduate and Argentina, the Seychelles and Venezuela are possible candidates for graduation from the DAC list in 2017.
The fund can support research capacity building to address the development issues, for example, to increase the skills and knowledge base and support the development of the research capability within developing countries. Capacity building should be aimed at improving the ability to undertake and disseminate research in order to promote the welfare and economic development of the developing countries.

**Key ODA compliance issues to note in writing applications for funding**

Any GCRF proposal must make it clear that its primary purpose is to promote the economic development and welfare of a developing country or countries. Applicants should:

- Seek to investigate a specific problem or seek a specific outcome which will have an impact on a developing country or countries on the DAC list;
- Provide evidence as to why this is a problem for the developing country or countries;
- Address the issue identified effectively and efficiently;
- Use the strengths of the UK to address the issue, working in collaboration with others as appropriate;
- Demonstrate that the research is of an internationally excellent standard;
- Identify appropriate pathways to impact to ensure that the developing country benefits from the research.

Any benefit to the UK or other developed countries has to be the secondary consideration and should not lead to a project being funded if it doesn’t primarily deliver the development objective.

Applications will be assessed by a competitive peer review process with ODA eligibility being a criterion for approval i.e. projects must be fully ODA compliant to be considered for funding. Initial ODA compliance checks will be carried out by the delivery partners; proposals that do not meet the eligibility as defined in this document may be rejected without reference to peer review. Peer reviewers will also be provided with this guidance and asked to comment on ODA compliance and likelihood of significant impact.

**Pathways to Impact**

It is important that the pathways to impact are realistic and appropriate to the particular developing country or countries context. Impacts from research are always uncertain, often unexpected and cannot be guaranteed – this includes impacts in developing countries. The likelihood and scale of beneficial impact is increased:

- If the research is orientated towards a problem or challenge affecting developing countries currently or in the future, where there is potential to benefit a large number of people to a significant degree;
- If the academics and research team can demonstrate experience or understanding of successful impacts within the specific context; relevant expertise might be located within both UK and overseas partners;
- If stakeholders that are close to the problem, from the voluntary and community sector, commercial and private sector and/or public sector and government, are actively involved in the research. Particularly through the whole life cycle from initiation, design, progression, knowledge exchange and application of the research.
Applications should describe the nature and scale of the problem or challenge they are seeking to address through this research. For example, how many people would be affected by progress in this area?

Applications should explain how any stakeholder collaboration and knowledge exchange activities strengthens the pathways to impact and likelihood or scale of beneficial outcomes. This should include any specific commitments from institutions or enterprises from developing countries to adopt or apply outcomes of the research, and where appropriate it is helpful to outline how this enhances local innovation and research capacity at an individual, institutional or whole system level. Applicants are encouraged to consider the resources required to undertake their proposed impact activities and include project specific costs within their request for funding.

Where the research could lead to commercialisation the application must demonstrate that the developing country or countries have existing or potential ability to grow industry (or other relevant sector). It is not normally acceptable for the commercialisation of research to take place solely in developed countries, unless there is a clear plan to build new businesses or business growth in the developing country or countries.

**Demonstrating ODA compliance within applications for funding**

As part of your application you may be asked to provide an ODA justification statement. You should consider using the questions below when preparing this statement.

1. Which country/ countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal and are these countries likely to continue to be ODA eligible for the duration of the research?
2. How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries?
3. How do you expect that the outcome of your proposed activities will promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list?

**Document History and Version Control**

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Global Challenges Research Fund:  
Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries

Frequently Asked Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is Official Development Assistance (ODA)?</th>
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<tr>
<td>ODA stands for Official Development Assistance. It is an international definition owned by the OECD and is not only a RCUK or UK Government term:</td>
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<tr>
<td>The OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) defines Official Development Assistance (ODA) as “flows to countries and territories” which are on the DAC’s list of ODA recipients, provided by official agencies to promote the economic development and welfare of countries on the list. It is expected that funding streams eligible for allocation from the UK’s ODA budget should demonstrate how they aim to contribute to aims to reduce poverty and increase sustainable development is required. ODA is highly relevant to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to which 17 goals have been described as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including zero hunger and good health and well-being.</td>
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<th>ODA compliance was checked at outline stage, will it be checked again at the full stage?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, ODA compliance will be checked again at the full stage and all proposals which do not satisfactorily meet the ODA criteria will not be considered by the sift panel.</td>
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<td>Your ODA compliance statement should explicitly demonstrate how the proposal meets key ODA requirements. It must answer the following three questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Which country/countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do you expect that the outcome of your proposed activities will promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particularly in the case of broad challenges affect a number of countries, applicants must explicitly identify aspects of these broader challenges which are particular to the partner country(ies) they are working with, as well as specific benefits in the target country(ies).</td>
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<tr>
<td>The RCUK guidance sets out the requirements for ODA compliance across GCRF.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/international/gcrfodaguidance-pdf/">www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/international/gcrfodaguidance-pdf/</a></td>
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<th>Is there a preference for Hubs to focus on with those countries in the ‘Least Developed Countries’ category of the DAC list?</th>
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<tr>
<td>All countries on the DAC list are eligible to be the primary country(ies) of focus. The only exception to this is for Chile, Seychelles and Uruguay which have now graduated from the DAC list. Whilst there is not a preference for specific countries within the DAC list, applicants are advised to focus on communities and/or populations which are the most vulnerable and in need.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Can programmes partner with more than one country?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, applicants should work with the most appropriate country or countries relevant to the development challenge/s identified. This can include single or multi-country interactions.</td>
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<th>The PI needs to be from the UK, should I have co-Directors based in my overseas partner</th>
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countries?

There are no fixed requirements with regards to the management or leadership structures for each Hub as we appreciate that this is likely to vary depending on the specific requirement of each Hub. Whilst you will only be able to identify one individual as the Principal Investigator on the Je-S proposal form, if appropriate you are able to identify other individuals as co-Directors when describing the team and key partnerships in the Case for Support.

When considering the leadership and management of the Hub proposal, we would advise that applicants remain mindful of the core aims of the call around building and supporting equitable partnerships and the importance co-design and co-delivery of the proposed Hub.

Do we need collaboration agreements in place for all partners by the May deadline?

No, collaboration agreements are not required at the point of submission. For successful Hubs collaboration agreements must be in place within 6 months of the start date for the award and before the flow of any funds.

Where can I find more about partnership building?

The following resource at the UKCDS website provides a useful summary: http://www.ukcds.org.uk/resources/finding-and-building-effective-partnerships

In addition you might find this toolkit useful: https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/about-us/rethinking-research-partnerships

If you wish to identify potential partners based in, or with research interests relating to African development, you may wish to use the PEI exChange platform, developed by the Planet Earth Initiative: http://pei.exchange/

Can my research also benefit the UK?

Yes, we would expect that the research will also indirectly benefit the UK, in terms of the wider impacts such as new research knowledge, publications and training etc., however, DAC list countries should be the primary beneficiaries; and you need to demonstrate this in your application.

Can we include elements of UK focused capacity building?

The primary focus of capacity building activities should be on individuals and organisations based in DAC listed countries. There may be some indirect capability strengthening in the UK, improving the ability of UK researchers to participate in international interdisciplinary research which delivers development impacts.

Where can I find out more about capacity strengthening?

A number of resources are available, the following may be a good place to start:

- Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine Capacity Research Unit’s guidance for researchers http://www.lstmed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/centre/Research_capacity_strengthening_lessons.pdf
- ESSENCE’s Seven principles for strengthening research capacity in low- and middle-income countries http://www.who.int/tdr/publications/seven-principles/en/
- UKCDS capacity resources http://www.ukcds.org.uk/work-theme/capacity-strengthening

Where can I find out more about interdisciplinary approaches to research?

A number of resources are available, the following may be a good place to start:

- Interdisciplinarity: Survey Report for the Global Research Council 2016 Annual
Are there any special requirements if my Hub includes animal research?

If your proposal includes animal research you must complete the animal research section on Je-S. In addition if the Hub includes overseas animal research you must attach an animal research statement (attached as a Letter of Support). If your research involves use of rodents overseas you must also complete and attach (as a Letter of Support) the relevant form.

See page of the call text document 15-16 for more information.

Can my proposal include a clinical trial?

Early stage clinical trials may be included within Interdisciplinary Research Hub proposals, however applications involving more advanced Phase 3 and 4 trials should be submitted to one of the dedicated Medical Research Council (MRC) calls.

The MRC support (in partnership with the Department for International Development, Wellcome Trust, and Department for Health) Phase 3 and 4 trials in global health intervention evaluation (clinical trials) which can be led by UK or LMIC partners and take place in multiple LMICs on the DAC list. This call is currently open: https://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/browse/jght-8/joint-global-health-trials-scheme-call-8/.

MRC also have a further joint activity (with the Economic and Social Research Council, DH, DfID and WT) in health systems research, which can include systems interventions https://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/science-areas/international-global-health-research/funding-partnerships/health-systems-research-initiative/.

Multidisciplinary trials can be supported by the above calls which can cover vector control interventions, behavioural & educational interventions, systems interventions etc. Additional information about global health funding partnerships and opportunities can be found here: https://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/science-areas/international-global-health-research/funding-partnerships/.

Can the title of the Hub change between the outline and full stages?

Yes, providing the new title meets the required naming convention. You do not need to seek prior approval, however please be aware that RCUK will approve Hub titles and branding prior to award.

Can the Principal Investigators and/or Lead Organisation change between the outline and full stages?

Generally speaking, no. Changes to the Principal Investigator and/or Lead Organisation will be considered on a case by case basis. The Research Office or applicant must contact the RCUK office via gcrf@rcuk.ac.uk should they wish to change the Principal Investigator/Lead Organisation on the proposal.

Can the Co-Investigators and Project partners on the proposal change between the outline and full stages?
Yes, we anticipate that the partnerships involved in the Hub will evolve as the full proposal is developed.

**Can a partner from a non-DAC list country outside the UK be a co-investigator on this call?**
Yes, they can be, providing their organisation meets the requirements for ‘research partner organisations’ and provide the appropriate support (as outlined in the call document).

**Can a partner from a third sector organisation (charities/NGOs) be a co-investigator on this call?**
Yes, if the organisation is a research partner organisation (meeting the RCUK eligibility and assurance requirements). If this is not the case, partners from third sector organisations can be included as project partners (see the project partner section of the call text for details on eligible project partner costs).

**Will all of the budget be awarded to the lead organisation?**
Yes, all funds will flow from RCUK to the Lead Organisation. The lead organisation will then be responsible to disseminating the fund over the lifetime of the award.

**Is there a desired balance of UK versus overseas partners or budget allocations?**
No, we have purposely allowed flexibility in terms of the number of partners and budget allocated, in order for applicants to propose what is most appropriate in their specific circumstance. Partnerships should be incorporated and key work packages and activity designed based on the skills and expertise required to successfully implement and deliver impact from the Hub. Budgets should be assigned in accordance with this. We would advise that applicants remain mindful of the core aims of the call around building and supporting equitable partnerships and the importance co-design and co-delivery of the proposed Hub.

**Within the resource summary on Je-S where should I include costs for overseas research partners, project partners and sub contracts?**
- **UK research partner** costs should be included under the fund headings as for standard applications.
- **Overseas research partner** costs should be included under the ‘Exceptions’ category. As you will only be able to select one percentage for the Exceptions category, for DAC list countries 100% of the costs should be included in the ‘Full Economic Cost £’ column, but for non-UK developed countries, 50% of the total costs should be included in this column.
- **All project partner** costs should be included in the ‘Exceptions’ category irrespective of the organisations location.
- For **subcontracts** costs for those managed by a UK organisation should be included under ‘Directly Incurred’ costs; costs those managed by DAC partners and non-UK developed countries should be included under ‘Exceptions’ (100% and 50% respectively, as described for research partners).

**Is a justification required for the Indirect costs requested for DAC partners?**
Yes, You should include a full justification for any Indirect costs associated with DAC partners within the Justification of Resources document.

**Can any UK costs be included as Exceptions?**
RCUK will award the costs associated with externally contracted social surveys and NERC data centre costs at 100%. These costs should be included as ‘Other Directly Incurred’ costs and flagged as exceptions.

**Will RCUK assist in the administration and management of flexible funding?**
Any flexible funding within Hub programmes should be administered and managed by the project team. The governance structures put in place to oversee the Hubs activities should have
ownership of any project risks and will have responsibility for ensuring compliance of this funding. Where appropriate, RCUK input can be sought via their role in these governance structures.

**Can I include honoraria fees for the Hubs Advisory Board members?**

Yes, include reasonable honoraria/per diem costs for members of Advisory Boards and/or Steering Groups can be included. In addition you may include reasonable costs to cover travel and subsistence associated with attending these meetings.

**Can Open Access fees be included in the costs?**

As RCUK award block grants to institutions to cover open access/publication costs, these are not eligible costs for UK organisations involved in the Hub unless they are for non-academic publications. You could include open access/publication costs for DAC partners within the ‘Other Directly Incurred’ costs.

**How do I represent the organisational contributions in my application?**

For the full application a summary of the cash and in-kind contributions from the organisations involved (lead organisation, research partner organisations and project partners) should be included in the relevant organisations Letter of Support. In addition a brief summary table should be included within the Justification of Resources attachment.

**Are partners who are self-employed eligible to receive costs from the Hub award?**

Individuals who are self-employed could be included as a project partner or subcontractors depending on the type of collaboration being proposed (intellectual collaboration versus provision of good or a discrete service). As we would consider these as partnerships with business, self-employed project partners would not be eligible to receive costs from the award. In the case of subcontracts, costs can be claimed and will be awarded based on the location of the organisation managing the subcontract.

**Do I need to register all Co-Investigators and Project Partners on the Je-S system?**

All applicants who are to be named as the Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on the proposal need to have a fully registered (verified) Je-S account (Co-Investigator’s organisations do not need to be registered). These accounts must be set-up by the individual. You should set up any additional Je-S accounts as soon as possible.

For Project Partners, individuals do not need to be registered on Je-S.

[https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/TermsConditions.aspx?mode=accountsetup](https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/TermsConditions.aspx?mode=accountsetup)

**What should be included in the Letter of Support from each organisation?**

Each letter should confirm the organisations support of and commitment to the proposal and summarise what cash and/or in-kind contributions they will be making. In addition overseas research partner organisations should include a statement confirming that they believe they meet the minimum eligibility criteria as outlined in the call text.

**I’m not sure what needs to be included in the theory of change, is there any guidance?**

Yes, additional guidance on what is required is included in the guidance documents section on the call webpage. This includes an example of the key elements which need to be included.

**Can we nominate peer reviewers?**

Yes, you are able to nominate up to 4 peer reviewers. RCUK will allow up to 2 reviews from nominated reviewers. Please note that we will not approach any nominated reviewers who have active collaborations with named individuals on the proposal. In addition those employed by organisations named in the proposal will not be approached.

**Do we need to submit letters of support from UK organisations or just overseas?**
Yes, a letter of support should be included from each organisation named as a research partner or project partner irrespective of location.

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<tr>
<th>Can we include support letter from organisations which are not listed as research partners or project partners?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Letters of support from non-partner organisations, are allowable however we would encourage applicants to be sensible about the number of these letters included and restrict these to instances of genuine and specific support. It is also worth bearing in mind that all individuals (and in some cases whole departments/organisations) submitting letters of support will be considered conflicted in terms of peer review.</td>
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<th>Is there a set proportion of the budget that can be set aside for the flexible fund?</th>
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<tr>
<td>There is no upper or lower limit for the flexible fund, however we would not anticipate this to be the main focus of the project. This flexibility is intended to allow the applicants to consider and propose what is appropriate to add value to and support their specific project.</td>
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<td>Please note that an estimate of the proportion of funds that you anticipate will be spent in developing countries, the UK and non-UK developed countries is required. Applicants will also need to provide and outline of how the fund will be managed and administered, including the process(es) which will be used to ensure ODA compliance.</td>
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<th>Do all references need to be included within the stated page lengths?</th>
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<td>Yes, any references/bibliography that you wish to include to support your proposal must be included within the stated page lengths and confirm with the stated font/text size requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Can Travel and Subsistence costs for business/government project partners to attend Hubs events/meetings be included?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes. Whilst these partners cannot receive salary costs, other directly incurred costs or indirect you can include reasonable travel and subsistence costs associated with attendance of Hub specific events and/or meetings.</td>
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<th>Can an organisation have multiple roles in the Hub e.g. as a Project Partner and a Sub-contractor?</th>
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<tr>
<td>In theory yes but only if strictly necessary. As a default an organisation should only participate in one way but we will consider exceptions on a case-by-case basis.</td>
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<th>Does the lead organisation need to have a collaboration agreement with every organisation receiving funds from the Hub?</th>
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<td>The lead organisation will need a collaboration agreement or contract with every organisation they directly send money too but if you are sending money to organisation A, who then send it to organisation B then the lead organisation doesn’t need an agreement with organisation B. The lead organisation will however need to be happy that they have sufficient assurance so that they can track the money down the line.</td>
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<th>Where should Project Partners be listed on Je-S and where should their costs be included?</th>
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<tr>
<td>You should list project Partners in the Project Partner section on Je-S any costs being requested for Project Partners should be entered in the ‘Other Directly Incurred’ section and be flagged as ‘Exceptions’.</td>
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<th>Can our overseas Research Partners buy a vehicle to travel between field sites as it is cheaper than hiring one?</th>
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Yes, this is fine providing it is fully justified in the Justification of Resources and the vehicle they purchase is below £10,000 GBP.

**My project involved surveying/interviewing people but no biological or medical testing, do I still need to complete the yes/no questions for human participation in the ethics section on Je-S?**

If your proposal involves any form of human participation you should answer yes to the first question, and yes/no to the remaining questions as appropriate. Some of the questions are more relevant to certain types of studies e.g. biological and/or medical studies so if the project is only conducting a survey/interviews you may only end up answering yes to some of the five questions.

**Can you confirm the margin sizes for the proposal document and whether there are any exceptions to the margin and font size requirements?**

The margins for the following documents uploaded to the proposal should be 2cm top/bottom and left/right:
- Case for Support
- Justification of Resources
- Pathways to Impact
- ODA compliance statement
- Data management plan
- CVs
- Animal research statement/additional questions (if applicable)

The letters of support (research partner, project partner, cover and other), and diagrams (including the workplan and Theory of Change) are exempt from the font requirements, however these must be legible at A4 size.

**Do the LMIC postdocs need to be listed within the researcher support posts section as well as Other Directly Incurred Costs in similar fashion to the non-UK Co-Is?**

No, the researcher support staff employed by DAC based partners (e.g. research assistants and PDRAs) do not need to be included in the researcher staff posts section. They should only be included within the ‘Other Directly Incurred’ costs section.

**Can we include web links within the case for support?**

Within the list of references, URL links to relevant publications or online resources are permissible. The case for support should be a self-contained description of the proposed work with relevant background, and should not depend on additional information. Applicants must not include URLs to web resources in order to extend their Case for Support.

**How can we enter the flexible fund for DAC organisations using the required budget format when we don’t yet know which organisations will be receiving it?**

You don’t need to use the required format for the flexible fund providing it is clear whether the current intention is that the money will be spent in the UK, DAC or non-UK developing countries.

All other overseas costs (DAC and non-UK developed countries) must be included using the required format.

**Contact**

If you have any questions about the call, please refer to our FAQs document in the first instance. If you have any further questions please contact:

**gcrf@rcuk.ac.uk**

Or

Sian Rowland
Senior Policy Manager – Global Challenges Research Fund
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Equality Impact Assessments

The Research Councils are committed to promoting equality and participation in all their activities, whether this is related to the work we do with our external stakeholders or whether this is related to our responsibilities as an employer. As public authorities we are also required to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations when making decisions and developing policies. To do this, it is necessary to understand the potential impacts of the range of internal and external activities on different groups of people.

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation. This covers both strategic and operational activities.

The term ‘policy’ used throughout this document, covers the range of functions, activities and decisions for which the organisation is responsible, including for example, strategic decision-making, arranging scientific strategy panels, conferences, training courses and employment policies. Whether an EIA is needed or not will depend on the likely impact that the policy may have and relevance of the activity to equality. The EIA should be done when the need for a new policy or practice is identified, or when an existing one is reviewed. Advice can be sought from your Research Council HR team.

The EIA will help to ensure that:
- we understand the potential effects of the policy by assessing the impacts on different groups both external and internal
- any adverse impacts are identified and actions identified to remove or mitigate them
- decisions are transparent and based on evidence with clear reasoning.

Ideally, an impact assessment should form part of any new policy, event or funding activity and be factored in as early as one would for other considerations such as risk, budget or health and safety.

Discrimination
Discrimination is where someone is treated less favourably or put at a disadvantage because of their protected characteristic. The different groups covered by the Equality Act are referred to as protected characteristics: disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), and age.

Discrimination is usually unintended and can often remain undetected until there is a complaint. Improving or promoting equality is when you identify ways to remove barriers and improve participation for people or groups with a protected characteristic.

Building the evidence, making a judgement
In cases of new policies or management decisions there may be little evidence. In such cases you should make a judgement that is as reliable as possible. Consultation will strengthen
these value judgements by building a consensus that can avoid obvious prejudices or assumptions.

Consultation
Consultation is very important and key to demonstrating that organisations are meeting the equality duties, but it also needs to be proportionate and relevant. Considering the degree and range of consultation will safe-guard against ‘groupthink’ by involving a diverse range of consultees. These are the key considerations, to avoid over-consultation on a small policy or practice and under-consultation on a significant policy or an activity that has the potential to create barriers to participation. Consultation can add evidence to the assessment.

Provisional Assessment
At the initial stage, you may not have all the evidence you need so you can conduct a provisional assessment. Where a provisional assessment has been carried out, there must be plans to gather the required data so that a full assessment can be completed after a reasonable time. The scale of these plans should be proportionate to the activity at hand. When there is enough evidence a full impact assessment should be prepared. Only one EIA should be created for each policy, as more evidence becomes available the provisional assessment should be built upon.

Valuing Differences
EIA's are about making comparisons between groups of employees, service users or stakeholders to identify differences in their needs and/or requirements. If the difference is disproportionate, then the policy may have a detrimental impact on some and not others.

‘You are looking for bias that can occur when there are significant differences (disproportionate difference) between groups of people in the way a policy or practice has impacted on them, asking the question “Why?” and investigating further’. 1

Evaluation Decision
There are four options open to you if you find a significant difference:

1. No barriers or impact identified, therefore activity will proceed.
2. You can decide to stop the policy or practice at some point because the evidence shows bias towards one or more groups
3. You can adapt or change the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias, or
4. In extreme cases or where positive action is taken you can justify it. For example, if the policy would require the use of animals in the research in a particular country. You’ve looked at the policy or practice from every angle, considered all available options carefully, and there still seems no other proportionate way to achieve the aim of the policy or practice. Then you are going to continue with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others.

In most cases, where disproportionate disadvantage is found by carrying out EIAs, policies and practices are usually changed or adapted. In these cases, or when a change has been justified you should consider making a record on the project or the corporate risk register.

1 http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/s/n/Acas_managers_guide_to_equality_assessments.pdf
Depending on the nature of the policy change, event or funding activity, the responsibility of who should complete the assessment, who should be consulted, and who should sign off the EIA will vary. Ultimate responsibility on whether an EIA is required and the Evaluation Decision(s) made after completing the EIA lies with the SRO, budget holder, project board or the most relevant senior manager. Further advice is available from your Equality, Diversity & Inclusion lead contact, HR, Peer Review Team, or the Events team.
### Equality Impact Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Policy/funding activity/event being assessed</td>
<td>GCRF Collective Fund: Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries call for full proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/activity</td>
<td>Following a call for outline proposals Research Councils UK invites 52 of the 248 proposals received to submit a full application for a challenge-led and outcome-focused GCRF Interdisciplinary Research Hubs which meet the aims of Official Development Assistance. Proposals will be required to make the case for the specific intractable development challenge(s) they will address and explain why the proposed Hub is the most appropriate approach. Each Hub will be required to demonstrate a well-integrated, interdisciplinary approach; research excellence; appropriate management and governance; a realistic pathway to impact; and a satisfactory framework to monitor and evaluate the programme. Priority will be given to proposals that address really challenging problems with genuinely radical and potentially transformative approaches. Assessment at full stage will be through a two stage process: the first involving external expert review and a sift panel comprising a broad interdisciplinary, international Panel (academic and non-academic); and the second whereby a subset of proposals are invited to interview again by interdisciplinary international panel(s) with representation from across academia and other stakeholder groups. At both stages applications will be assessed against assessment criteria outlined in the call document. The most competitive proposals will then be awarded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is it possible the proposed change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people? (Advice should be sought from HR. If not relevant, record reasons and evidence; the remainder of the form need not be completed)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)</td>
<td>The development of this call has drawn upon feedback from the initial collective fund call, the outline stage of the Interdisciplinary Research Hubs call, and Research Council led GCRF activities as well as advice from a number of advisory groups including the GCRF Strategy Advisory Group which includes members of the research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition elements of this call have been socialised with other ODA funders including DfID and the Department of Health and additional members of the research community with feedback from this process contributing to the refinement of the call.

### 5. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?

Applicants to the GCRF Collective Fund call for Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries.

### 6. Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event

Monitoring and review will primarily be through RCUK office, in particular colleagues in the GCRF team, GCRF Co-Ordination Group and Grants Business as Usual Group (GBAUG).

In addition the GCRF Strategy Advisory Group will play an active role in monitoring this investment activity. RCUK works hard to ensure appropriate and diverse representation on this group and will apply a similar approach/process for selection of the assessment Panel(s) associated with this call.

Due to the restrictions on the budget for this call and the time required to carry out the peer review process for a call of this nature it will only be possible to open the full call for 3 months. To help minimise the potential impacts of this we have ensured that applicants are informed of the outcomes of the outline call and provided proposal specific feedback (successful only) as soon as possible and that the call documents outlining the requirements for proposals be made available as soon as possible. In addition RCUK will be holding an applicant’s event to support the applicants in developing high quality proposals and to address any key questions/concerns.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?</th>
<th>Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used</th>
<th>Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
<td>Data is collected regarding disability at the application stage. Adjustments will be made throughout the assessment process where appropriate.</td>
<td>Flexible terms and conditions are in place to support applicants appropriately without discrimination. Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate. RCUK presence at the panel assessment meeting and interviews will act as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will receive Unconscious Bias training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender reassignment</td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
<td>Data is collected regarding gender at the application stage. This information is not made available to the assessment panel members throughout the peer review process.</td>
<td>Throughout the process panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. RCUK presence at panel assessment meetings and interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will receive Unconscious Bias training. Flexible terms and conditions are in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marriage or civil partnership</strong></td>
<td>Impact expected to be neutral.</td>
<td>place to appropriately support applicants who require time to attend psychiatrist/psychologist appointments or who are undergoing gender reassignment involving medical interventions. Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pregnancy and maternity</strong></td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
<td>This information is not made available to the assessment panel members; however it may become apparent through the proposal paperwork. Flexible terms and conditions are in place to support applicants appropriately without discrimination. Adjustments are made throughout the assessment process where appropriate to assist individual applicants. Throughout the process, panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. RCUK presence at the panel assessment meeting and interviews and interviews will act as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Impact Description</td>
<td>Data Collection and Availability</td>
<td>Process Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
<td>Data is collected regarding race at the application stage.</td>
<td>Throughout the process panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. RCUK presence at panel assessment meeting and interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will receive Unconscious Bias training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion or belief</td>
<td>Impact expected to be neutral.</td>
<td>This information is not made available to the assessment panel members throughout the peer review process.</td>
<td>Throughout the process panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. RCUK presence at panel assessment meeting and interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will receive Unconscious Bias training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
<td>This information is not made available to the assessment panel members throughout the peer review process.</td>
<td>Throughout the process panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. RCUK presence at panel assessment meeting and interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will receive Unconscious Bias training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sex (gender)

**Potential negative impact** – however based on current policies this is very low risk.

Data is collected regarding gender identify at the application stage.  
This information is not made available to assessment panel members throughout the peer review process. However, it is likely to be apparent in most cases through the proposal paperwork.

Throughout the process panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. RCUK presence at panel assessment meeting and interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will receive Unconscious Bias training.

### Age

**Potential negative impact** – however based on current policies this is very low risk.

Data is collected regarding age at the application stage. 
This information is not made available to the assessment panel members; however it may become apparent through the proposal paperwork.

Throughout the process panel members are required to follow best practice in taking positive steps to safeguard funding decisions. RCUK presence at panel assessment meeting and interviews acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. In addition all Panel members and the peer reviewers from the UKRI International Development peer review college will receive Unconscious Bias training.
Evaluation Decision: Proceed

1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will proceed.
2. You can decide to stop the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups
3. You can adapt or change the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias
4. In extreme cases or where positive action is taken you can justify it.

Will this EIA be published: Yes
Date completed: 01/02/2018
Review date (if applicable): N/A
Example Equality Impact Assessments

To view several completed EIA’s please see the following template and the links below:


### EPSRC Mixed Gender Panel Membership Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Policy/funding activity/event being assessed</td>
<td>Mixed Gender panels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/activity</td>
<td>There is a 30% target for the under-represented gender for all panels by April 2017. The total percentage of female panel members FY 2015/16 was 23%. This target does not mean that every panel has to meet that 30%, but some panels will need to exceed this target if some do not meet it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is it possible the proposed change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people? (Advice should be sought from the appropriate internal contact. If not relevant, record reasons and evidence; the remainder of the form need not be completed)</td>
<td>No, gender diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant stakeholders)</td>
<td>BEIS directive to have all advisory bodies mixed gender, EPSRC E&amp;D network, Peer Review Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Who is affected by the</td>
<td>Meeting participants, interviewees, panel convening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6. Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event

Panel participants data & review point, log of issues & review point

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<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender reassignment</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage or civil partnership</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy and maternity</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion or belief</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sex (gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority of panels are currently mixed gender.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further information on panel member balance over the previous four financial years is available here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female interviewees will benefit from mixed gender panels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive action for more females to be involved in prioritisation panels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of overuse of smaller pool of appropriate female panel members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interventions:**
- Increase gender diversity of the college
- Publicise policy to colleagues
- Monitor issues log
- Monitor panel participant data
- Investigate non compliance
- Promote alternative methods for panel member participation e.g. videoconference

### Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not known at present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation Decision:**

*Agree to change the policy so that all panels are mixed gender, with specific interventions to manage and monitor impact.*

- Different groups affected by the policy have different needs, experiences, issues in relation to it.
- Data showing high/low participation and/or success rates in relation to the policy

**Will this EIA be published:** Not required

**Date completed:** May 2016

**Review date (if applicable):** every 6 months: Nov 2016, May 2017...