GCRF: RCUK Collective Fund

Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries

Deadline for Outline proposals: 9 November 2017, 4pm (GMT)

Summary

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a 5-year £1.5Bn fund and a key component in the delivery of the UK Aid Strategy: tackling global challenges in the national interest. The fund aims to ensure that UK research takes a leading role in addressing the problems faced by developing countries through:

- Challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research
- Strengthening capacity for research and innovation within both the UK and developing countries
- Providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need.

Research Councils UK invites proposals from eligible UK research organisations to establish and lead a number of challenge-led and impact-focused GCRF Interdisciplinary Research Hubs which meet the aims of Official Development Assistance.¹ Between £8M - £20M (full economic cost) will be available for each Hub, provided over a 5 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** – address a specific currently intractable development challenge(s) with realistic pathways with the potential to deliver a broad range of measurable impacts, and a clear plan for sustaining and further developing the work undertaken during the lifetime of the Hub.
- **Interdisciplinary research excellence** – anchored by well-integrated interdisciplinary approach which demonstrates both underpinning research excellence and the ability to think across, between and within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and that adds significant value to existing global research efforts.
- **Global partnerships** – a commitment to capacity building and a programme of research and supporting activities which is co-developed with international partners, through genuine and equitable partnerships with researchers and relevant development agencies; third sector and Civil Society Organisations; industry and other private sector organisations; policy makers.
- **Organisation and leadership** – strong research and operational leadership which incorporates robust financial and risk management, assurance, governance and effective monitoring and evaluation, and facilitates the ability to learn and adapt over the lifetime of the Hub.

¹ GCRF ODA guidance: [www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/international/gcrfodaguidance-pdf/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/international/gcrfodaguidance-pdf/)
Assessment will be through a two-stage process. The first stage will comprise of a short Intention to Submit survey and call for outline proposals. Following this, the most competitive outline proposals will be invited to develop full proposals.

**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. Typically such challenges cut across a number of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and, because they are multidimensional in nature, they require:

- the capacity to think across and between as well as within the thematic areas of the various SDGs;
- a clear understanding of the way 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.

Examples of such global development challenges might include but are certainly not restricted to:

- achieving economic growth in an environmentally sustainable way while also ensuring social cohesion and adequate access to safe food, water and services
- addressing protracted conflict and other situations of instability and violence (e.g. involuntary migration and forced displacement) in the context of food insecurity, environmental pressures and demographic change
- development of resilient infrastructure, smart services and energy production in the context of climate change, protracted conflict and social and political instability
- transforming education systems and using technological innovation to address social and gender inequality and enhance skills and life chances for women and children, recognising the challenges of demographic change and economic dislocations
- achieving food security in ways that improves nutrition and health; recognises local contexts; and makes agriculture, food production and consumption more environmentally and economically sustainable
- urban development that fosters diversity and inclusivity and employment for increasing numbers of young people whilst tackling air pollution and other environmental hazards, promoting physical/mental health, and reducing the risk of epidemics.

*This list is indicative only. We welcome proposals identifying challenges outside these examples.*

**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 2 sus 2 tainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1758GSDR 2015 Advance Unedited Version.pdf 3 sus 2 tainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2328Global Sustainable development report 2016 (final).pdf
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 multidimensional 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) 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 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 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-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.

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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.

Please note that not all of these characteristics will be assessed at the outline stage. Further details on the criteria used for the assessment of outline applications are included in the ‘Assessment procedure’ section.

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.

Successful outcomes might include technological solutions; new evidence, insights or information that informs policy and practice directly; or disruption/challenge of existing (“status quo”) approaches.

Hubs must demonstrate full commitment from all organisations involved, including a letter of commitment (within the Case for Support) from the Pro-Vice Chancellor or equivalent of the lead research organisation. 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". 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.

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

How to apply

Funding Available
Awards are expected to be in the range of £8 - 20 million at full economic cost, with the final figure dependent on the scope of the Hub and the scale of the challenge(s). 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 dependant 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. It is expected that the resources requested in a full proposal, if invited, will broadly reflect those in the outline proposal.

Eligibility

Lead research organisation – For this call, proposals can be led by either an organisation eligible to receive funding from RCUK (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforces/) or by a UK Public Sector Research Establishment (PSRE). Applicants from PSREs must contact Pamela Hicks (pamela.hicks@rcuk.ac.uk) before applying. Please note: PSRE eligibility for

5 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
this call does not confer eligibility for other Research Council calls.

The lead organisation will be responsible for the overall management of the Hub including control, disbursement and assurance of funds.

**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

**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 Pamela Hicks (pamela.hicks@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. This will only be required at the full stage; invited proposals will be required to ensure all research partner organisations are registered on the Je-S system, and include a letter of support from the Pro-Vice Chancellor for research (or equivalent authority) from each organisation in the 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.

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<th>Ability to deliver</th>
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<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>
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<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,</td>
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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; 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 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.

| Governance and control | • be a higher education organisation, public laboratory, or non-profit research intensive organisation;  
|                        | • have a governing board with independent representation appointed to jointly oversee the management of the whole organisation;  
|                        | • have satisfactory processes for preventing, detecting, reporting and responding to allegations of fraud, bribery and corruption;  
|                        | • have satisfactory processes for the effective collection, management, analysis and dissemination of data;  
|                        | • have satisfactory processes in place that meet Research Integrity and Ethics requirements, including processes for dealing with allegations of misconduct;  
|                        | • be subject to an independent annual audit; and  
|                        | • have measures in place to prevent and mitigate conflict of interest which could affect employees or governing board members participation in decision-making. |

| Financial stability    | • be permitted by their country’s Government to receive funding from foreign sources;  
|                        | • have a bank account that is in its legal name; and that can be reconciled to the finance management system;  
|                        | • 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  
|                        | • 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 subcontractors 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.

If the proposal is successful at the final peer review stage, all international research partner organisations will be required to complete an RCUK Overseas Due Diligence Questionnaire. More details on the Due Diligence requirements will be made available in the full call documents.
**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**?).

- **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 per cent fEC in-line with standard Research Council rules. Please note that all funds will be administered through the lead research organisation.

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.

**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>
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<tr>
<th>Research Partner Organisation Location</th>
<th>Direct Costs</th>
<th>Indirect (overheads and Institutional) costs</th>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Current fEC policy (80% direct &amp; indirect)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed Countries, Chile, Uruguay, Antigua and Barbuda, 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>
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</tbody>
</table>

Organisations based in developed countries (i.e. countries not on the OECD DAC list) as well as Chile, Uruguay, Antigua and Barbuda 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. On the J-eS outline form 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 ([www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DAC List of ODA Recipients 2014 final.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DAC List of ODA Recipients 2014 final.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 pertains to the country the organisation’s headquarters are located in. For example, multilateral intergovernmental organisations such as UNESCO and 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 5 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 per cent 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.

**Demand management**

Applicants may only submit one proposal as the Principal Investigator/Hub Director.

Research organisations and researchers are encouraged to collaborate to develop and submit the strongest possible proposals addressing specific development challenges. Within the Case for Support, outline proposals must include a letter of commitment from the Pro-Vice chancellor of research (or equivalent role) from the lead organisation. Full proposals will need to include letters of commitment from all collaborating organisations.

Please note that RCUK reserves the right to limit the number of full proposals invited from each individual institution as part of demand management, if appropriate.

**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 5 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. RCUK will approve the names of each funded Hub and any associated branding.

**Intention to Submit**

It is mandatory for applicants intending to submit an outline proposal to complete a short online Intention to Submit (ITS) survey by midnight British Summer Time (BST) on 29th September 2017.

This survey is intended as a guide for RCUK as to the potential number and diversity of proposals likely to be submitted to this call. This process will assist RCUK in planning and allow us to provide some feedback regarding the potential demand for this call prior to the closing date. Information provided in the ITS form will not be used in the assessment process.

Any questions about the ITS should be sent to gcrf@rcuk.ac.uk.

**Submitting an outline proposal**
Outline proposals must be submitted via Je-S by **16:00 Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) on 9th November 2017. 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 Je-S account. To submit a proposal, applicants should:

1. **Log in** to the Joint Electronic System (Je-S)
2. Select **Council**: EPSRC
3. Select **Document Type**: Outline Proposal
4. Select **Scheme**: RCUK Outline
5. Select **Call/Type/Mode**: Interdisciplinary research hubs to address intractable challenges faced by developing countries
6. Click **Create Document**

When completing the Je-S submission, in addition to the Je-S Outline Proposal, applicants should include:

- A Case for Support, using the template provided. This consists of three sections and should be converted to a single pdf document prior to uploading. Only proposals using this template will be accepted.
  - Section 1. **Proposal details** (total of 5 pages maximum)
  - Section 2. **ODA compliance statement** (1 page)
  - Section 3. **Organisational commitment**. Applicants should include a letter of commitment from the Pro-Vice Chancellor or equivalent of the lead organisation, including an outline of the proposed commitment from all partner organisations.
- A CV for the Principal Investigator/Hub Director. This should be no longer than 2 pages.
- No other attachments are permitted. Proposals including additional information will be rejected.

At 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.

It is anticipated that full proposals (by invitation only) will be submitted via Je-S in May 2018 (date to be confirmed). An indication of the timelines for the assessment of full proposals is included in the ‘Key dates’ section. Further details of the assessment process, additional requirements for full proposals and how to apply will be outlined in the full stage call documents.

**Assessment procedure**

**Outline assessment process**

The purpose of the assessment at the outline stage is to:

- ensure alignment to the aims of this call
- ensure alignment with ODA expectations
- facilitate a strong portfolio of proposals across a spectrum of challenges, approaches and disciplines
- provide constructive feedback to assist successful applicants with building compelling full proposals
- manage demand for the full proposal stage

Proposals submitted by the deadline will be considered by one or more multi-disciplinary international peer 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.

Applicants whose outline proposals are successful will be invited to submit a full stage proposal. Applicants will be informed as to whether their outline proposal has been successful before the end of February 2018.

**Outline stage assessment criteria**
At the outline stage the assessment will focus on the development challenge(s), proposed vision and research programme, and the team. Outline proposals will be assessed using the following criteria. Proposals that fail to adequately address these criteria will not be invited to make a full submission.

**Fit to call**
- Does the proposal identify an appropriate and significant intractable challenge(s) and demonstrate ODA compliance?
- Does the proposal take a challenge-led and multi-dimensional approach, articulating an ambitious vision and world-leading and well-integrated programme of research?
- Is it clear from the proposal why investment in a Hub is essential, and is the level of investment and activity justified by the scale and persistence of the identified challenge(s)?

**Research excellence**
- Does the proposal clearly articulate the research need and outline a novel and timely research programme?
- Does the proposal demonstrate new thinking and innovative interdisciplinary approaches?

**Research team and international partnerships**
- Does the proposed team have the appropriate knowledge, expertise and range of disciplines to deliver the proposed approach?
- Has an appropriate range of partners been identified, and are these partnerships complementary, authentic and equitable?
- To what extent have appropriate developing country partners (including researchers, practitioners and policy makers) played a leading role in challenge identification and co-design of the proposed approach?

**Likelihood of impact**
- To what extent will the proposed Hub build strategically on existing ODA and non-ODA investments (RCUK, DfID and other delivery partners) and add value to existing development partnerships and global research efforts?
- Does the proposed Hub identify realistic pathways to implementation which take into consideration the relevant in-country context and have the potential to deliver significant and measurable impacts?

**Full stage assessment criteria**
Invited full proposals will be assessed using the following criteria.

**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 outline assessment panel. In addition those applicants invited to submit a full stage proposal will be provided with additional individual feedback.

**Co-ordinating and managing the portfolio**
In order to manage demand and to develop a strong portfolio of full proposals, the following may be taken into consideration by the funders, following the recommendation from the outline Panel(s):

- Level of interest across the different development challenges, approaches, disciplines, and contexts
- The added value of the Hub in the context of existing investments
- The relevant budget available
- Demand from Research Organisations

**Key dates**

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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>29th September 2017</td>
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<td>9th November 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline proposal assessment panel</td>
<td>January 2018</td>
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<td>Outline proposal outcomes announced</td>
<td>January/February 2018</td>
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<td>Call for full proposals opens (invite only)</td>
<td>January/February 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Call for full proposals closes</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full proposal sift panel</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full proposal interview panel</td>
<td>October 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full proposal outcomes announced</td>
<td>November 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Successful awards start</td>
<td>1st December 2018</td>
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**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

**Change Log**

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

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF)?**

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a 5-year £1.5 billion resource funding stream, announced as part of the 2015 Spending Review¹, to ensure that UK research takes a leading role in addressing the problems faced by developing countries. The GCRF will deploy the UK’s world-class research capability to address the challenges faced by the developing world. The funding is protected science spend and the Research Councils are primary delivery partners. The GCRF is also part of the UK Government’s pledge to allocate 0.7% of Gross National Income to Official Development Assistance, promoting the welfare and economic development of developing countries. With the GCRF focus on global challenges, research investments are expected to span disciplines including the biological sciences, environmental sciences, medicine, engineering and physical sciences, the social sciences and the arts and humanities.

**What is Official Development Assistance (ODA)?**

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:

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.

**How do I meet the ODA criteria for the call and will this be assessed at outline stage?**

Yes, ODA compliance will be assessed at the outline stage. You will need to demonstrate that the primary purpose of your project is the economic development and welfare of the identified developing country(ies).

To achieve this, you should consider the following aspects when preparing your application:

- Your proposed research should investigate a specific problem or seek a specific outcome which will impact on the economic development and welfare of a DAC list country(ies) in the immediate or longer-term
- You should articulate a clear and specific case for the benefit and relevance of the proposed research to the proposed country(ies)
- Consider the pathway to realising the development impact (even if outside the timeframe of the project)
- Details of countries on the DAC list of ODA recipients are available at [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm).

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The RCUK guidance sets out the requirements for ODA compliance across GCRF. [www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/international/gcrfodaguidance-pdf/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/international/gcrfodaguidance-pdf/)

Applications which do not address the ODA criteria will not be accepted.

**Can my research also benefit the UK?**
Yes, we would expect that the research will also 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.

**Do I have to hold a GCRF Growing Capacity and Capability award to submit a proposal?**
No, this is not a pre-requisite for this call.

**The call text includes example challenges. Are these really just examples?**
The challenge examples in the call text are included to give potential applicants an indication of the scale of challenge and level of interdisciplinarity that we would expect the vision for each Hub to span. The exact challenge, research programme and supporting activities and the team are all expected to vary depending on what is appropriate for each specific proposal.

A major component of this call is to encourage innovative perspectives and approaches, and we hope to invest in a portfolio of Hubs which spans a range of challenges, research approaches and disciplines. As such we would welcome a range of applications both including and beyond the examples given.

**Do I have to have include research that is relevant to the remits of all of the Research Councils?**
No, you are not required to include all Research Council remits. However, given the breadth of these intractable development challenges and the requirement for interdisciplinarity, it is anticipated that Hubs will span multiple Councils’ remits.

**What disciplines need to be involved and do the programmes have to be interdisciplinary?**
It is expected programmes will engage the right mix of disciplines necessary to address the identified challenges including those not traditionally engaged in developing country problems. To reflect the fact that addressing these complex, cross-cutting and multidimensional challenges requires interdisciplinary approaches, interdisciplinary working is one of the key principles underpinning the Hubs. The appropriateness and integration of the disciplines identified in the proposal forms one of the assessment criteria for outline applications.

**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).

**I am an academic/researcher from a country on the DAC list. Can I submit an outline proposal?**
No. Proposal can only be submitted by the lead organisation, which for this call should be an eligible UK research organisation.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>I’m already working with partners in developing countries can these partners be involved in the programme?</td>
<td>Yes, Hubs funded under the call should aim to develop new partnerships and collaborations, however proposal may also aim to enhance existing partnerships depending on the needs for addressing the challenge(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can programmes partner with more than one country?</td>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where can I find out more about partnership building?</td>
<td>The following resource at the UKCDS website provides a useful summary: <a href="http://www.ukcds.org.uk/resources/finding-and-building-effective-partnerships">http://www.ukcds.org.uk/resources/finding-and-building-effective-partnerships</a>. 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: <a href="http://pei.exchange/">http://pei.exchange/</a></td>
</tr>
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| 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_c__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 |
| Is there an institutional cap on the number of Hub proposals which can be submitted? | No, there is no institutional cap for this call. In addition, whilst applicants may only submit one proposal as the Principal Investigator/Hub Director, there is no limit on the number of proposals an individual can be involved in as a Co-Investigator, Project Partner or Subcontractor.                                                                                      |
| What is the difference between the Newton Fund and the Global Challenges Research Fund? | The Newton Fund and the Global Challenges Research Fund share the same primary objective: to promote economic development and social welfare of developing countries. They also share a secondary objective: to contribute to the continued strength of the UK’s research and innovation base and our wider prosperity and global influence.  

Newton Fund strategy is that it is based upon equal partnership with 16 selected partner countries, each of which provides match funding for every programme. It primarily focusses on Middle Income Countries on the OECD DAC List, as matched resources are required from partner countries and they have been identified as emerging knowledge economies with the potential to become key players in the research and innovation landscape.  

The Global Challenges Research Fund strategy aims to ensure that UK research takes a leading role in addressing the problems faced by developing countries. It aims to harness the expertise of the UK’s world-class research base to pioneer new ways of tackling global challenges. GCRF provides funding for programmes to address widespread global issues rather than working in partnership with a specific country to tackle a specific challenge facing that country and it does not require matched funding from partner countries. |
Research Councils will consider the portfolio of previous and upcoming activities across ODA funds when planning new GCRF activities. This allows the Research Councils to focus new activities to avoid excessive overlap and ensure complementarity between ODA funds.

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:
- Nature special on Interdisciplinarity http://www.nature.com/news/interdisciplinarity-1.18295
- HEFCE and British Academy Interdisciplinary conference report (UK focussed) http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/Events/2016/Name,110328,en.html

Can the Principal Investigator on a Hub proposal change between the Intention to Submit and Outline proposal stages?
Generally speaking, no. Changes to the Principal Investigator will be considered on a case by case basis, with changes only permitted under exceptional circumstances. The Research Office or applicants must contact the RCUK using the contact details below should they be in the position whereby they wish to change the Principal Investigator on a proposal.

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/.

If my Hub is in an area covered by a previous call will I be disadvantaged?
No, not necessarily. Given that these are different types of awards, we will not be specifically excluding or deprioritising challenges relating to previous investments. However, a key aspect in the assessment of the Hub applications is assessing how the proposed Hub will compliment and add value to international research and investments in related areas (particularly large investments).

Is there a preference for Hubs to focus on with those countries in the ‘Least Developed
**Countries’ category of the DAC list?**

GCRF is agnostic with regards to the primary country(ies) of focus, providing this country(ies) is included on the DAC list. The only exception to this is for Antigua and Barbuda, Chile and Uruguay which are due to graduate from the DAC list prior to the Hubs being awarded. 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.

**Is there any flexibility in the budget between the outline and full stages?**

Yes, there is some flexibility in the budget between the outline and the full stage. Applicants will be able to move costs between the different fund types so long as the overall budget for the full proposal is within 10% of the outline budget (providing this is still within the £8-20M (100% fEC) budgetary range). In exceptional instances where applicants identify a need for greater variation in the budget they should contact the office who will consider requests on a case by case basis.

**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).

**How do I represent the organisational contributions on the Je-S proposal form?**

For the outline application an estimate of all of the cash and in-kind contributions from the organisations involved (lead organisation, research partner organisations and project partners) in the hub proposal should be included in the ‘Total Cash Contribution from Project Partners’ and ‘Total In-Kind Contribution from Project Partners’ sections of the resource summary section. You should also provide an overview/summary of the proposed contributions in the letter of support from the Pro-Vice Chancellor or equivalent from the lead organisation.

**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.

**Can I delete text from the Case for Support template and/or change the margin sizes?**

All applicants are required to complete the Case for Support template as provided. You are not permitted to delete the included text or remove the provided table for Section 1. The standard
margins provided in the document must be used (2.54cm) and text must be size 11 Arial font or equivalent in line with standard RCUK policy.

The page lengths for each section will be counted as follows:
- Section 1 will be considered from the start of the first question i.e. the first blue box (if the whole page length is used this will extend 12 lines onto page 6).
- For Section 2 none of the explanatory text is included in the page limit.
- There is no page limit for Section 3.

Applications not meeting these requirements will not be permitted to proceed.

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

Yes, we would strongly advise that all individuals who are intending to be Co-Investigators or Project Partners on the Hub are registered on Je-S and included within the Applicants/Project Partners sections on the Je-S proposal form. At this stage the organisations do not need to be registered.

**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.

**The PI needs to be from the UK, should I have co-Directors based in my overseas partner 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.

**What should be included in the Pro-Vice Chancellor’s letter?**

At the outline stage, applications are only required to include one letter from the Pro-Vice Chancellor or equivalent of the lead organisation (to be included under Section 3 of the Case for Support). This letter can include a brief summary of the proposal, however the main purpose is to confirm the support of the lead organisation and provide an overview/summary of the organisation commitment from each organisation (lead, research partner and project partner) involved in the Hub. This should focus on the contributions on top of/supporting those requested from RCUK and does not need to outline how these partners ill engage in the proposed research and/or supporting activities.

**I wasn’t able to attend one of the UK regional engagement events. Is it possible to access the presentation?**

The events hosted by the University of Leicester and School of Oriental and African Studies were recorded, and videos of the presentation are available on their websites. In addition there are separate very similar recordings of the presentations and a pdf of the slides available on the RCUK GCRF webpage (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/gcrf/).

https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/red/funding/official-development-assistance-oda-funding/gcrf-leicester-workshop

https://www.soas.ac.uk/researchoffice/events/reo-training-programme/22sep2017-rcuk-gcrf-regional-event-london---soas.html

**Will I be able to change/add Co-Investigators and Project Partners between the Outline and Full**
Yes, there is flexibility to change, add or remove Co-Investigators and Project Partners between the Outline and Full stages. Please be aware however that a significant aspect of the assessment at Outline stage is around the proposed team and partnerships, and there is a limit as to how much the overall budget can be changed between the Outline and Full stages. We would advise that as far as possible the core team/partnerships are agreed and included in the Outline proposal.

**Do I need to complete and upload a Justification of Resources?**

No, at the outline stage we only require the resource summary contained within the Je-S proposal form. This comprises four figures representing the total costs requested for Directly Incurred, Directly Allocated, Indirect and Exceptions.

**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 however include open access/publication costs for DAC partners within their indirect costs.

**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
01793 444014

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GCRF Collective Fund: Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Development Challenges Faced by Developing Countries

Purpose
It is mandatory for applicants intending to submit an outline proposal to this call to complete this short online Intention to Submit (ITS) survey by midnight British Summer Time (BST) on 29th September 2017.

This survey is intended as a guide for RCUK as to the potential number and diversity of proposals likely to be submitted to this call. This process will assist RCUK in planning and allow us to provide some feedback regarding the potential demand for this call prior to the closing date. Information provided in the ITS form will not be used in the assessment process.

Any questions about the ITS should be sent to gcrf@rcuk.ac.uk.

Intention to Submit form

1. Please enter details for the Principal Investigator. Please note that the Principal Investigator should be based at the lead organisation.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>E-mail address</th>
<th>Phone number</th>
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</table>

2. Please enter the title of the proposed Hub:


3. Please identify the primary challenge area for the proposed Hub:


4. Please provide a rough estimate of the total FEC cost of the proposed Hub:

   £

Data protection
In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the personal information you provide on this form will specifically be used for the purpose of administering this form. Analysis of the information will be viewed by Research Councils staff only and your information will not be used for any other purpose without your specific consent.

For further information on how your information will be used, how we maintain the security of your information, and your rights to access information we hold on you, please contact the Joint Information Services Unit - PSUinfosec@ahrc.ac.uk.

I confirm that the information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge, true and complete. I confirm that I understand the purposes of the form and the reasons for the collection of my personal data, in order to inform me of the outcome of the application process.
5. I confirm that the information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge, true and complete. I confirm that I understand the purposes of the form and the reasons for the collection of my personal data.

Yes ☐ No ☐

6. I agree to these terms

Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Print name

______________________________

8. Date submitted

______________________________
Introduction

The GCRF provides a unique opportunity to build a global community of researchers committed to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. It aims to encourage and support new and existing partnerships between UK and developing country researchers, national and international development agencies, and policy-makers in both North and South. It allows UK research excellence to be deployed in a strategic and coherent way to understand and suggest solutions to the most significant and complex problems faced by the developing world, while at the same time strengthening research capability in developing countries. It promotes meaningful and equitable relationships between UK research institutions and developing country partners that will help ensure relevance and the identification of realistic pathways by which research can impact on national, regional, and international development policy and practice.

The promise of substantial and sustained levels of ODA funding provides an opportunity to engage researchers - particularly the best early career researchers - who care about development and want their work to help make the world a better place. The GCRF will be geared to understanding and solving real world development problems. Given the complex nature of these problems, it will also stimulate work across different disciplines, drawing on the distinct contributions that each has to make and encouraging truly original and transformative approaches to multidimensional challenges.

The GCRF is above all good news for the poor and the marginalised in the developing world. The UK already carries out world class research and is a world leader in international development; the GCRF allows these two spheres to come together in a new way by increasing the scope and depth of research activities. It offers UK academics the chance to co-create useable research evidence through a new model of transdisciplinary collaboration and equitable partnerships between researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers in both developed and developing countries that will aspire to be world leading. By stimulating the development of these new capabilities and strengthening existing transdisciplinary partnerships where they exist, the GCRF will also allow the UK to enhance its own capacity and capability to contribute to sustainable development through research.

Purpose of the Criteria

The GCRF will support a diverse but balanced portfolio of activities with the common feature that they all in some way address the challenges defined for developing countries in the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (the SDGs). In order to ensure coherence across the portfolio and to maximise its impact a common set of core criteria will be used to guide funding decisions. These will also provide a framework for future evaluation of the programme as a whole.

The criteria set out below will be applied by the GCRF Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) when it is invited to comment on the plans and proposals of GCRF Delivery Partners. The SAG also expects that they should provide the framework for all Calls against the GCRF, although each of these will include elements that are specific to each case, and it is understood that not every project can be expected to address all the issues set out in these criteria.
Core Criteria

Problem and Solution Focused

GCRF research is aimed first and foremost at addressing global sustainable development challenges, and is intended to transform the lives of the maximum number of poor people. The starting point for research proposals should therefore be a significant problem or development challenge. The extent to which southern partners have played a leading role in problem identification and the design, definition, and development of the proposed approach will add to the credibility of proposals for funding as it will demonstrate relevance and also local appetite and capacity to implement solutions. A balance of research will be sought across all the challenge areas thrown up by the SDGs. Successful proposals will need to demonstrate that they address the multiple dimensions of sustainability in an integrated way.

Research Excellence

An underlying assumption behind the GCRF is that new perspectives, not constrained by traditional methodologies or disciplinary silos, are needed to address these challenges. Evidence should therefore be provided of how new research communities and learning alliances will be brought together to address the problem and why this approach will bring new and valuable insights, contributing to a step change to existing knowledge and approaches. Evidence will be sought that Southern partners - including policy makers and practitioners, as well as researchers - have played a leading role in research design, and planning for implementation and uptake.

Likelihood of Impact

The GCRF will be judged by how much it makes a real contribution to improved social welfare, economic development, and environmental sustainability, and redresses inequalities. Proposals should therefore contain robust indicators that show: how they will create the knowledge to bolster communities' resilience to environmental and human-made challenges, such as climate change, epidemics, conflict, and other emergencies; how they will provide a stronger evidence base for sustainable development policy and practice and help both donor and recipient governments to spend limited resources wisely; how they will encourage the effective use of knowledge and technology to create opportunities for economic development, community and business engagement, commercialisation and innovation, leading to new and improved products, processes, services, and business models.

Capacity Building and Partnership

The GCRF aims to build UK and global development research capacity and capability by forging strong and enduring partnerships between academic communities in the UK and the Global South and by enhancing the research and innovation capacity of both. This requires strong networks to be built involving researchers, policy makers, and practitioners, plus the involvement of civil society and the private sector. Calls for proposals should encourage the development of new approaches and ways of working across conventional boundaries that will deliver this goal. Individual research proposals should provide credible evidence that such networks either exist or will be grown as part of the research project and that they will be sustainable.

GCRF Strategic Advisory Group

January 2017
Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries

Section 1. Proposal details (total 5 pages maximum)

What is the chosen currently intractable development challenge(s), why has it been intractable to date, and why is investment in this Hub essential to address this challenge(s)?

Describe the overarching vision, key research programmes and main work packages for the proposed Hub and clearly identify:

- what is novel and timely about this approach;
- how does it sit within and add value to the global research landscape;
- how it will make progress against challenges previously defined as intractable; and
- how this research will address specific in-country/regional needs.

Provide an overview of the capacity and capability of the proposed team (UK and international). This should include evidence that the team:

- is well-integrated and has the appropriate knowledge, expertise and range of disciplines; and
- appropriately engages relevant developing country partners in the identification of challenges, co-design of the proposal and delivery of the Hub.

Section 2. ODA compliance statement (1 page)

ODA compliance is a mandatory requirement for this call. Please describe how the proposed Hub meets the Official Development Assistance requirements including:

- Which country/countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal?
- How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of this country/countries?
- How do you expect that the outcomes of your proposed activities will promote the economic development, health and social welfare of this country/countries?

Section 3. Organisational commitment

Please include a letter of support from the Pro-Vice Chancellor or equivalent of the lead organisation, including an outline of the proposed commitment from all partner organisations.
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>
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<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 outline proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/activity</td>
<td>Research Councils UK invites outline proposals from eligible UK institutions to establish and lead a number of 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 and a realistic pathway to impact. Priority will be given to proposals that address really challenging problems with genuinely radical and potentially transformative approaches. Assessment will be through a two stage process, involving an initial sift of outline proposals by a multi-disciplinary international peer review panel(s) with representation from across academia and other stakeholder groups and assessed against assessment criteria outlined in the call document. The most competitive outline proposals will then be invited to develop full proposals.</td>
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<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>
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<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 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 community. 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</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?</strong></td>
<td>Applicants to the GCRF Collective Fund call for Interdisciplinary Research Hubs to Address Intractable Challenges Faced by Developing Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event</strong></td>
<td>Monitoring and review will primarily be through RCUK office, in particular colleagues in the GCRF team. 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 be necessary to have the call for applications open over the summer. To help minimise the potential impacts of this we have ensured that the call for outline proposals will be open for as long as possible. In addition RCUK intend to host a webinar(s) which will reduce the requirement for travel and this will be recorded and available publically after the fact. The intention is also to support a series of regional GCRF event to maximise the potential options/limit the requirement for travel.</td>
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<td>Group</td>
<td>Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender reassignment</td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Marriage or civil partnership</strong></td>
<td>Impact expected to be neutral.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pregnancy and maternity</strong></td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Religion or belief</strong></td>
<td>Impact expected to be neutral.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual orientation</strong></td>
<td>Potential negative impact – however based on current policies this is very low risk.</td>
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</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 meetings acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. |
| **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 meetings acts as an additional assurance to help ensure unbiased peer review. |

**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: 27/06/2017
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>
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<tr>
<td>1. Policy/funding activity/event being assessed</td>
<td>Mixed Gender panels</td>
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<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>
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<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>
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<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>
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<td>5. Who is affected by the</td>
<td>Meeting participants, interviewees, panel convening</td>
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<td>Group</td>
<td>Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?</td>
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<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender reassignment</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marriage or civil partnership</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pregnancy and maternity</td>
<td>Not known at present</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>Religion or belief</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>Sex (gender)</td>
<td>Not Neutral</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Not known at present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</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...
Organisation, governance and evaluation 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 will be required to provide a governance plan outlining the 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 your 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:

- PI/Hub Director as Chair accountable for the award
- Other investigators on the award represented
- Primary management group
- Responsible for plans, policies, responsibilities and key decisions
- Owns project risks

**Advisory Group**
Each award should also have an overarching advisory group with the following essential features:

- Independent, authoritative Chair
- Advises PI/Executive group
- Key stakeholders represented
- Research Council/RCUK observer
- Advises on strategy and progress
- Oversees project risks

2. Project management organisation (PMO)
At the full stage, applicants will be 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
- Regular engagement with the RCUK GCRF and Assurance Teams and relevant Research Council colleagues

Full proposals will be required to provide a breakdown and justification of all PMO costs, including the roles and responsibilities of any management staff.
3. **Plans for Monitoring and Evaluation**
Each full proposal must outline plans for monitoring and evaluation. This should include how the following will be monitored:

- Hub progress
- Research outcomes
- Impact from research
- Impact from other activities, e.g., capacity building

This should include the process for developing logframes, theory of change models and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) where appropriate.

4. **Due Diligence and assurance**
Prior to approval of successful awards, applicants will 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.
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:
  - is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and
  - 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 20172.

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)

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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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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>21/06/2016</td>
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