

Section A: Official Development Assistance (ODA) and GCRF strategy

The strategy

1. Summarise the key aspects of your three year **strategy for development related and GCRF research activity**, including:
 - a. Your institution's strategy and priority objectives for all development related research activity funded through all sources for three years from 2018-19.
 - b. A summary of the key aspects of your three year strategic plan for QR GCRF, in light of the criteria and objectives for the GCRF outlined in the guidance.
 - c. How activity funded through QR GCRF fits into your broader strategy and priorities for all development related research activity.
 - d. How activity funded through QR GCRF relates to the UK strategy for the GCRF.¹
 - e. How your development-related and GCRF strategies relate to your wider institutional strategy for using QR.
 - f. Likely key barriers and enablers to implementing your strategy.
 - g. The key activities by which you will realise your objectives, such as capacity and capability building; mono-disciplinary, interdisciplinary and collaborative research; generating impact from research; meeting the full economic cost of GCRF activity funded through other sources; rapid response to emergencies with an urgent research need; and pump priming.
 - h. The main developing countries, included in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list, which you intend to collaborate with.

Summary of the key aspects of our three year strategy for development related and GCRF research activity and how this fits into your broader strategy and priorities for all development related research activity:

The College has identified four key strategic priorities for GCRF related research activity:

- to build research capacity nations on the DAC list by establishing effective networks and mobile research (and researchers),. In line with our internationalisation strategy, we will also

¹ UK Strategy for the Global Challenges Research Fund,
<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/gcrf/challenges/>

proactively seek partner institutions in the developing world with an interest in widening participation and part time educational models to work with and support to develop.

- to support themes that are aligned to strategic research priorities for the College which will have an immediate benefit in the partner country. These include better healthcare and healthcare infrastructures in the developing world – taking a holistic view of both physical and mental health components, and with a core focus on childhood development; the endangered archive; and cities.

We anticipate that these two priority areas will be the primary focus for the 2018-19 GCRF QR allocation, with the strands for our other key priorities coming on stream over years two and three of the programme.

- supporting good governance and ensuring that political, economic and virtual/digital economy infrastructures are robust.

- building economic, cultural and managerial capacity directly in, and for the direct benefit of countries on the DAC list.

These priorities for development research have been chosen to support the College to establish equitable and sustainable partnerships with researchers and organisations in the developing world both within the HEI sector and beyond, and to grow people-based capacity in line with our two centuries-old mission of widening access and participation. Through this approach we will proactively engage more of our research community with international development challenges and, through a co-production ethos, enhance expertise in this area across career stages and countries.

We believe that these areas represent a synergistic alignment between the global research challenges which underpin the GCRF, the interests of Birkbeck's research base, and the Colleges overarching research and internationalisation strategies. As such, we intend to use these themes to try to build cohorts of researchers which includes those who have not previously considered development applications for their research; However, our primary objective will be use the fund to support excellent research on a project-by-project basis and projects will still be considered to be eligible if they fall outside these identified areas, as long as they are compliant with ODA principles, are working with a country (or countries) on the DAC list, articulate how they fit to an appropriate global challenge and present a compelling argument that the anticipated impacts will be realised within the duration of the funding.

This approach is deliberately an extension of aspects of our current research and internationalisation strategies, including our strategic aims to create inspiring research from empowered researchers, mobilising everyone to contribute to this process, facilitating the best research through working with others, especially internationally, and using research findings to support Global development. We are especially keen to capitalise on Birkbeck's geographical position in the heart of London, with its enormous array of cultural, artistic and scientific institutions and its considerable population of academics and internationally

renowned researchers working on every conceivable kind of research question. Birkbeck is also further internationalising its research through partnerships with universities abroad, in order both to facilitate new understandings and to enhance our ability to confront global issues. Birkbeck encourages partnerships and formal links as well as the networks of informal contacts and co-researching arrangements that are characteristic of a thriving intellectual life. We currently have an established relationship with many HEIs in countries on the DAC list and plan to use these existing links as the starting point for our work with the GCRF QR allocation. For example, we have high-level agreements with the University of San Paulo in Brazil and eight University's in China; we have established research partnerships across many of the African countries on the DAC list and the Birkbeck Institute for Humanities currently offers a travelling fellowship to its annual PGR summer school which is reserved for applicants from the global South (this year the Fellow has been selected from the University of Cape Town). This fellowship scheme is highly oversubscribed with typically ca. 50 applications for one place and an application for GCRF QR funds to allow more places to be offered to PGR students from countries on the DAC list would probably be viewed positively by the panel.

Our research and internationalisation strategies also commit us to ensure that researchers are provided with financial resources to enable them to form and maintain international links, and to facilitate international research collaborations. Our researchers have recently applied for external funding from GCRF-supported schemes in the following areas: Geography (Southern Africa, India), Philosophy (Brazil), Life Sciences (India), Law (Turkey) ,History (India, Turkey), Psychological Sciences (The Gambia) and Psychosocial Studies (Brazil), Earth and Planetary Sciences (China; Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, East Africa), Politics (Afghanistan), Management (India), Economics, Mathematics and Statistics (India). GCRF QR will become one of the cornerstones to deliver these strategic aims by allowing us to support more projects along these lines. .

How activity funded through QR GCRF relates to the UK strategy for the GCRF:

As noted above, most of these funds will be allocated on a competitive project-by project basis; however, based on our analysis of previous applications to GCRF-funded initiatives from the College, we anticipate that these projects will primarily support the national strategy through the following mechanisms:

- by developing meaningful and long-term partnerships to strengthen the capacity for research, innovation and knowledge exchange in the UK and developing countries
- by encouraging researchers who have not previously considered the applicability of their research to development issues to participate in the field

Our four focus research areas (described above) are thought to be those most likely to support resilience in health and wellbeing, protect archival and cultural patrimonies, encourage inclusive and equitable education and sustainable infrastructures, economies, and societies whilst promoting human rights, managerial capacity building, good governance and

social justice. All of these aims are directly mirrored in the national strategy and are consistent with the College's broader research strategy.

How your development-related and GCRF strategies relate to your wider institutional strategy for using QR?

QR income is used by the College to support the development and enhancement of our research environment through initiatives such as PhD studentships, sabbatical leave, supporting the full cost of research applications etc. However, of most relevance to this application is our support for ECR fellowships through, for example, match funding to the Leverhulme ECR Fellowships Scheme, the visiting fellowships programme run by our Research Institutes, and pump priming activities, including the annual Research Centres' collaboration scheme.

Likely key barriers and enablers to implementing our strategy:

The key challenge to the success of this strategy is likely to be ensuring that all our researchers fully understand the requirements of ODA. This concern is reflected in the ordering of our selected strategic priorities – we have mitigated this risk in the short term by focussing initially on activities where there is less ambiguity in the interpretation of ODA requirements, whilst also building time into the programme to allow for an effective training and information toolkit to be developed.

A second recognised challenge is that of ensuring that the programme effectively delivers in terms of building and enhancing equitable and sustainable partnerships, rather than just reinforcing links which are already strong. This risk will be mitigated through active monitoring of funded partners.

The key enabler to implementing this strategy is its strong consistency and resonance with our research strategy, our internationalisation strategy and our educational strategy and mission, meaning that we do not need to introduce our researchers to any new ways of thinking. Instead, it builds upon existing strengths to support our researchers to explore subjects that interest them and to work with new partners to produce better research outputs and outcomes.

Key activities:

Our key aim is to use as much as possible of our GCRF award to support our researchers to undertake projects which are excellent in terms of their research content, but which also primarily of benefit to a specific partner (or partners) from the DAC list of countries, are synergistic with the global challenges which are pertinent in the specific country and present a compelling argument that the anticipated impacts will be realised within the duration of the funding. We also have a second focus of supporting institutions who have a mission which is well aligned to the Birkbeck mission to make higher education accessible and available (and thus to directly build capacity in the specific country).

In 2017, the College received a Newton Fund allocation from HEFCE which was used to support projects which were challenging gender inequalities in Chile, investigating the role of fin-tech payment technologies in rural economies in India, investigating the physico-chemical structure of earthen architecture and supporting lawyers working with poverty-stricken people at risk of re-location (both in Brazil). We were unable to support other applications in areas as diverse as AMR in TB, reparation following human rights violations, participatory urban planning, detection of toxic metals, human/crocodile interactions, social enterprise, emotional resilience, and solar power. We intend to use the processes established to allocate and monitor the Newton funding as the model for how we will allocate and over-see the GCRF QR allocation.

Based on this experience, our internal analysis of our researchers interests and the applications which have been made to external GCRF calls, we anticipate that the following will represent the key activities we will fund; however, it should be noted that the primary selection criteria for funding will be ODA compliance with partners in a suitable country or countries from the DAC list (i.e. that the project will deliver direct benefit to the partner country, and that the partner country is eligible for this funding), the excellence of the research, how the project addresses a suitable global challenge and the likelihood of realising the anticipated impacts. As such this should be viewed as an indicative list,

- Capacity building activities such as networking events and conferences. In particular, we will look to support one significant conference around a core theme (such as mental health or governance) in each year of the award and to seek to have a significant number of speakers and attendees from the developing world.

- We will investigate capacity building through the establishment of an early career fellowship programme whereby a cohort of early career researchers from partner institutions attend Birkbeck to undertake intensive research methods training in key areas. They will be encouraged to function as a cohort after they return to their host institutions through shared seminars, writing workshops and providing web content. These additional activities will be mentored by Birkbeck. We will look to develop this programme using existing infrastructure in our research institutes to host visiting researchers from developing countries, including organising, where necessary, skills camps to provide these researchers with training in the latest research tools that they may not previously have had access to.

- supporting pump priming activities and collaborative research projects and generating the necessary impacts from such research (for example, we have some research on Apps in healthcare which could be beneficially developed for the developing world. We also have research expertise in tackling diseases such as TB which are more common in the developing world and could be more appropriately commercialised in the developing world than in the UK).

- meeting the full economic cost of research funded under other GCRF programmes.

Based on our analysis of previous and ongoing international research projects and the interests of our research base, we anticipate that the main developing countries we will collaborate with are:

- The Sahel region in Africa (from Senegal to Eritrea) and Southern Africa more generally
- Egypt
- India
- West Bank and Gaza Strip
- Turkey
- Brazil (and other eligible countries in Latin and South America)
- China

In all these countries we would be building on existing links. We will also look to develop links in areas where we have had links in the past or where our researchers have indicated that they would like to develop links. However, as noted above, no country on the DAC list will be excluded as long as the criteria for selecting the project for funding have been met, and a secondary selection criterion will relate to working with institutions in the developing world with a widening participation ethos.

2. Provide details of the main intended **outcomes and impacts** of your strategy.

The intended outcomes from this strategy are:

- The establishment of equitable and sustainable partnerships with researchers and organisations in the developing world
- the creation of new research and discovery of new avenues of research
- the development of impacts from previously completed research
- increasing the number of our researchers who engage with development research

These outcomes will extend and compliment those more specific outcomes from each individual project; each project will have to specify credible pathways to impact in their application and this will include both key deliverables and milestones to allow the progress of the project towards these impacts to be monitored.

The intended impact of this strategy is to increase the capacity at Birkbeck to undertake developmental research.

This sits alongside the anticipated impacts from the projects funded through our strategy,.

We anticipate that most (if not all) of the projects we support will deliver capacity building impacts, so capacity building on its own will not be enough to secure funding and other credible impacts will also need to be identified.. Based on our analysis of our current research strengths and historic research in these areas, we believe other impacts which are highly likely include:

- healthcare and wellbeing impacts arising from our research strengths in the life sciences and cognitive neuroscience. These may be in the form of new medicines or testing regimes, or targeted interventions, some of which will have additional economic activity beyond the lifetime of the award.

- impacts on policy and regulatory frameworks through our research in business and management, politics, law, philosophy etc.

- cultural impacts through research in partnership with cultural organisations and local community groups

- quality of life impacts through our research into issues such as gender and sexuality, psychosocial studies

We also anticipate that the research we fund will have impacts which relate directly to Specific development needs from the UK Strategy for the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). For example, if we consider the projects listed above from our previous Newton fund round, the anticipated impacts from those projects can be mapped to these development needs as follows:

- secure and resilient food systems supported by sustainable marine resources and agriculture - detection of toxic metals;

- sustainable health and well being - AMR in TB; human/crocodile interactions;

- clean air, water and sanitation - detection of toxic metals

- affordable, reliable, sustainable energy - investigating the role of fin-tech payment technologies in rural economies; solar power

- sustainable livelihoods supported by strong foundations for inclusive economic growth and innovation - challenging gender inequalities; social enterprise

- resilience and action on short-term environmental shocks and long-term environmental change - emotional resilience; solar power

- sustainable cities and communities - supporting lawyers working with poverty-stricken people at risk of re-location; participatory urban planning;

- sustainable production and consumption of materials and other resources - investigating the physico-chemical structure of earthen architecture;

- understand and respond effectively to forced displacement and multiple refugee crises - reparation following human rights violations;

- reduce conflict and promote peace, justice and humanitarian action - reparation following human rights violations; supporting lawyers working with poverty-stricken people at risk of re-location

- reduce poverty and inequality, including gender inequalities - challenging gender inequalities; emotional resilience

It should be noted that the only development need which none of these projects map to through either their major or minor impacts is the need to support the development of inclusive and equitable quality education, which is why we have emphasised widening participation as a secondary criterion for selecting projects.

Management of GCRF

3. How will your HEI **monitor** and **evaluate** its progress and compliance in ODA and GCRF activity, including assessing geographical distribution of activity, outputs, outcomes and economic and social impacts?

Please describe the policies, procedures and approach you have in place to measure progress, evaluate outcomes, identify lessons learned, and ensure ODA compliance.

Our research grants and contracts office will be tasked with identifying GCRF-funded projects where we could seek to fund the full economic cost of the work. We believe it should be straightforward to incorporate this into our existing business processes, which when combined with the reporting requirements of external funders will provide the necessary level of oversight and compliance.

All other funds will be allocated on a project-by-project basis using an open call for applications with defined deadlines. As a condition of award, applicants will need to demonstrate that expected standards of research excellence have been reached and how the work is compliant with ODA requirements – i.e. how it is investigating a specific problem or seeking a specific outcome and will have a direct impact on an identified developing country from the DAC list. They will also be required to provide evidence about why their focal issue is a problem in the specific country, how they will address the issue effectively and efficiently, why Birkbeck is the suitable partner institution to undertake this work, and that credible and specific pathways to impact have been articulated to ensure that the developing country has the opportunity to benefit from the research.

Applications will be assessed by the Colleges Research Strategy Group (PVM (Research), Head of Research Strategy Support, Graduate Research School Manager and the five Associate Dean (Research) from each School), and in this case the committee will be supported by a colleague from the Research Office who is the College's expert in GCRF and ODA.

A bespoke application form will be created which will allow for a scoring system which considers:

- the quality of the research
- ODA compliance
- whether the project has demonstrated that it is both viable and will be primarily of benefit the country (or countries) from the DAC list
- whether the articulated pathways to impact are credible and sensible
- whether the project has demonstrated how it meets one of the global challenges relevant to the specific country or countries

Any project which fails to demonstrate any of these criteria will not be funded.

Recipients of awards will also agree to a defined reporting period to allow us to monitor and evaluate the geographical distribution of activity, outputs, outcomes and economic and social

impacts – for conference/networking type activities this is likely to be only a final report whereas project-based awards will need to provide quarterly reports as a minimum. This will be monitored as a live action by our Research Strategy Group and be formally reported on an annual basis to our Research Committee which will have responsibility for ensuring compliance. In instances where either Committee has concerns, the Chair will nominate an appropriate member of the committee to work with the research team to resolve the questions. Where it is appropriate to do so (for example, if a project extends over more than one financial year), funds will be stage-gated, with subsequent funding dependent upon reaching agreed deliverables and milestones.

Section B: Use of QR GCRF 2018-19 allocation and future QR GCRF priorities

4. Please complete the table in Annex A2 detailing the expected spending and activities for QR GCRF in the academic year 2018-19. Note that the total QR GCRF spending must equal the indicative allocation (available in Annex C), and all activities must be ODA-compliant for strategies to be assessed as ODA-compliant overall.
5. Please add here any explanatory notes on how you have completed the table in Annex A2 that will help inform assessment of ODA compliance.

Those entries in grey where we are looking to make up the full economic cost of the award are applications which are still pending. If these applications are unsuccessful the funds will be re-allocated to the pump priming and networking strands.

The fellowships programme is resource intensive and expensive and this is an estimated costing at this time. We need to do further work to explore fully our capacity and then to appropriately cost this, and it is possible additional funds will need to be allocated here.

Given that our vision for this funding is to allocate to projects on a competitive basis it is impossible at this time to pick out expected countries or anything other than very generic outputs and impacts. However, based on our previous research in developing countries we would anticipate that China, India, Brazil and West Bank and Gaza Strip will feature prominently at least in the early phases.

6. How would your **priorities and activities** for 2018-19 QR GCRF change if the funding level differs from that outlined in indicative allocations? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

If the funding allocated to GCRF QR was to decrease significantly, we would remove the Visiting Fellows' strand of activity – we view this as something of a pilot in 2018/19 and whilst it is a strand that is directly in line with our vision and mission it could safely be deferred without a substantive negative impact in the short term.

If the funding were to be substantially increased we would look to increase the following lines of activity:

Collaboration and networking
Pump priming
Generating impact from research

7. Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR GCRF activity in 2019-20? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Our key priority for the 2019/20 and the 2020/21 allocations will continue to be to better support our researchers to apply successfully for GCRF funded strands of activity provided by other funders, including conferences and networking activities, pump priming activities and additional support to better develop the impacts of existing research. Our abiding vision is that the needs of the research base are defined by the research base, but we retain the option to intervene strategically if warranted by the outcomes of our monitoring processes described above.

In addition, in year one of our allocation, we will ask a group of our Research Institutes where bringing together international cohorts of researchers with common interests is a key part of their mission (i.e. The Birkbeck Institute for Social Research, the Birkbeck Institute for Humanities and The Birkbeck Institute of the Moving Image) to develop strategies and a proposal for how they can use the GCRF QR allocation to support their missions over years two and three of the allocation. These will be considered at the panel meeting at the end of year one.

Throughout the period, our primary strategic priority for all developmental related research activity will continue to be to build research capacity in developing countries through establishing effective networks and mobile research (and researchers).

Our second priority theme will continue to be to support better healthcare and healthcare infrastructures in the developing world – taking a holistic view of both physical and mental health components, and with a core focus on childhood development.

Our third priority theme relates to good governance and ensuring that political, economic and virtual / digital economy infrastructures are robust, and our fourth focuses on building economic and managerial capacity directly in developing countries. A greater proportion of the money will be allocated to these areas in the later funding rounds.

It is anticipated that over the three years of the GCRF QR cycle, our activities will develop and deepen. This programme will demonstrate ODA compliance through supporting resilience in

health and wellbeing, inclusive and equitable education and sustainable infrastructures, economies, and societies whilst promoting human rights, good governance, managerial capacity and social justice. All of these aims are directly mirrored in the national strategy.

8. Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR GCRF activity in 2020-21? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Our key priority for the 2019/20 and the 2020/21 allocations will continue to be to better support our researchers to apply successfully for GCRF funded strands of activity provided by other funders, through conferences and networking activities, through pump priming activities and through additional support to better develop the impacts of existing research. Our vision will remain that the needs of the research base are defined by the research base, with the option for strategic intervention if that becomes necessary following our monitoring processes described above.

Throughout the period, our primary strategic priority for all developmental related research activity will continue to be to build research capacity in developing nations through establishing effective networks and mobile research (and researchers).

Our second priority theme will continue to be to support better healthcare and healthcare infrastructures in the developing world – taking a holistic view of both physical and mental health components, and with a core focus on childhood development.

Our third priority theme relates to good governance and ensuring that political, economic and virtual / digital economy infrastructures are robust, and our fourth priority area related to building economic capacity directly in developing countries. A greater proportion of the money will be allocated to these areas in the later funding rounds.

It is anticipated that over the three years of the GCRF QR cycle our activities will develop and deepen. This programme will demonstrate ODA compliance through supporting resilience in health and wellbeing, inclusive and equitable education and sustainable infrastructures, economies, and societies whilst promoting human rights, good governance and social justice. All of these aims are directly mirrored in the national strategy.