



UK Research
and Innovation

Global Challenges Research Fund 2018

STFC – External Innovations & 21st Century Challenges

Call Guidance

Closing date submission deadline: 16:00 11-September-2018

(Call opens 18 June 2018)

Proposals to be submitted through the Research Councils' joint electronic submission (Je-S) system.

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Table of Content

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Background..... | 2 |
| 2. Funding Available and General Principles | 3 |
| 3. Eligibility | 4 |
| 4. Collaborators..... | 5 |
| 5. Additional Grant Conditions | 5 |
| 6. How to Apply..... | 6 |
| 7. Guidance on writing an application - Documents required..... | 7 |
| 8. What can be applied for? | 10 |
| 9. Assessment Process..... | 13 |
| 10. Assessment Criteria | 13 |
| 11. Appendix 1: Additional Global Challenges Research Fund Conditions..... | 14 |

1. Background

- 1.1. The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a five year, £1.5bn resource funding stream, announced as part of the 2015 spending review, to ensure that UK research takes a leading role in addressing the problems faced by developing countries. In addition to a Collective Fund for interdisciplinary research, the UK Research and Innovation Councils have each received directly allocated portions of the GCRF. GCRF 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](#).
- 1.2. STFC's 2017 GCRF Foundation Award call funded projects of a range of sizes that would lay new foundations and build on existing ones to use STFC-funded science and technology to:
 - address challenges faced by countries on the DAC list through disciplinary and interdisciplinary projects; and
 - strengthen capability for research and innovation in support of economic development and welfare, within both UK and countries on the DAC list
- 1.3. In 2018 there was also an STFC Opportunities call for activities to support early partnerships and collaborations aimed at tapping the potential of the STFC community to address challenges in developing countries (GCRF), to improve productivity and economic benefit across the UK (ISCF) or to address challenges associated with potential future calls arising from UK Research and Innovation.
- 1.4. Therefore, the aim of this call is to support projects that will deliver tangible outcomes and maximise the practical impact of research and innovation to improve the lives and opportunities of the global poor.
- 1.5. A common set of criteria have been developed to provide a coherent framework for GCRF programmes and proposals:
 - problem and solution focus
 - research excellence
 - likelihood of impact
 - capacity building and partnerships
- 1.6. Different projects will include elements that are specific to themselves and it is understood that not every project can be expected to address all the issues set out in these criteria.
- 1.7. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that the project is primarily relevant to promoting the economic development and welfare of developing countries. Guidance on ODA, demonstrating ODA compliance in applications for funding, ODA-eligible countries and the UN Global Goals for Sustainable

Development is available via the [UK Research and Innovation GCRF webpages](#) and, in particular, the [GCRF ODA guidance](#). Potential applicants should discuss their ideas with the STFC GCRF team (contact: gcrf@stfc.ac.uk) as early as possible in the process of developing a proposal in order to establish its suitability.

2. Funding Available and General Principles

- 2.1. Up to £3m over two years will be available in this call for projects which seek to maximise the practical impact of STFC-funded research and innovation to improve the lives and opportunities of the global poor:
 - address challenges faced by countries on the DAC list through disciplinary and interdisciplinary projects; and
 - strengthen capability for research and innovation in support of economic development and welfare, within both UK and countries on the DAC list
- 2.2. Interdisciplinary projects are welcomed, where appropriate. It is vital that applicants consider the international development context of their proposed projects, including socio-economic and environmental factors as appropriate. Projects must focus on evidenced, unmet needs identified by stakeholders and/or collaborators in countries on the DAC list.
- 2.3. When developing proposals, investigators should be mindful of the overall budget of £3m for this call and should request funding appropriate to the scale of the project and the impact that will be achieved.
- 2.4. Projects awarded through this call may start on or after 1 April 2019 and must end by 31st March 2021. Projects following on directly from STFC's Foundation Awards Call should not start new awards until after the existing ones have completed. When selecting a proposed start date applicants should be as realistic as possible in terms of when they will be able to start their projects e.g. in terms of the need to recruit staff or sign collaboration agreements with partner organisations. Applicants are encouraged to discuss start dates with STFC before submitting a proposal.

2.5. Equality of opportunities

- 2.5.1. As a funder of scientific research, STFC is committed to:
 - ensuring that people from the protected groups are not discriminated against by our policies, strategies or procedures in the consideration of applications for funding;
 - monitoring annually the outcomes of funding applications for evidence of bias;

- consulting on measures to remove barriers to the participation of women in STFC activities, including: involvement in advisory bodies; applying for and being in receipt of funding; and, hence support the retention and career progression of women working in STFC areas of science;
- working proactively with our partners – the universities where we fund research and the international organisations to which the UK subscribes through STFC – to embed there the same equality and diversity principles enshrined in [STFC's Equality Scheme](#).

2.5.2. Further information on STFC's equality of diversity policy can be found on the [STFC website](#).

3. Eligibility

- 3.1. The lead Research Organisation (RO) must be eligible to hold Research Council grants. Full details of approved Research Organisations can be found on the [UK Research and Innovation website](#).
- 3.2. Lead applicants must be employed within a Research Organisation group previously or currently funded by the STFC core Science Programme (nuclear physics, particle physics & particle astrophysics, astronomy & space science, and accelerators & computing in support of these) or employed within STFC Laboratories/Facilities and must show that the work proposed will develop technologies and expertise directly from this research.
- 3.3. Co-investigators must be based at either the lead organisation or a research partner organisation. 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 STFC GCRF 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 an STFC GCRF application.
- 3.4. Proposals for projects must clearly demonstrate that the science, technology and expertise involved originated from the STFC core Science Programme or the STFC national facilities and laboratories.
- 3.5. The receipt of previous GCRF funding is not a requirement for eligibility.
- 3.6. Project proposals should be submitted through a Je-S application. Funding for successful projects will be awarded to the lead institution named on each application. This institution will then be responsible for disbursing funds to any other institutions/organisations named on that application. Joint applications involving STFC national facilities and laboratories either as the lead or as a

partner Research Organisation must submit a separate, related Je-S application for the STFC element.

4. Collaborators

- 4.1. Appropriate collaborators and/or project partners in one or more countries on the DAC list are a mandatory requirement for proposals. These collaborators may be academic researchers and/or research users but engagement with end users is particularly welcome. Overseas Co-Investigators from research organisations in countries on the DAC list may be included on proposals. We will also support costs associated with activities conducted in countries on the DAC list, e.g. consumables, field work. The lead institution and Principal Investigator must be based in the UK.
- 4.2. Applicants should note that all Co-Investigators will need to have a Je-S account before they can be added to the Je-S proposal form; the individual Co-Investigators will also have to activate their account. **This process can take up to three working days so please allow plenty of time to complete this step before the closing date of the call.** [Guidance on setting up an account](#) is available on the Je-S website.

5. Additional Grant Conditions

- 5.1. STFC grants funded through this call will be subject to additional conditions detailed in Appendix 1. These include:
 - ODA compliance
 - acknowledgements and reporting
 - Government support
 - grant extensions
 - transfer of funds from the lead UK research organisation to an overseas organisations
 - due diligence and assurance
 - collaboration agreement
- 5.2. UKRI require research organisations that are involved in partnering with overseas organisations to have policies and processes in place regarding due diligence and to carry out the process using a risk-based approach. Research organisations will be asked to evidence this as part of the UKRI funding assurance process and as part of the awarding process for calls such as GCRF.

- 5.3. It is not expected that Research Organisation will carry out the same level of due diligence checks for £2k of funding being distributed as they would for £200k. The level of due diligence should be commensurate with the risk. As a minimum, Research Organisations should carry out checks listed in Step One in the [UKRI Guidance for Research Organisations on Due Diligence](#) on all third parties they are funding. They should take into account the impact on the lead research organisations should anything occur with the third party organisations versus the cost of taking steps to mitigate the risk.
- 5.4. In particular, applicants should note that the lead Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring proper financial management of the grant and accountability for the use of public funds. The grant will be awarded on the basis that if any funds are transferred to another UK or overseas organisation then the Research Organisation awarded the grant must undertake due diligence checks to ensure that the funding will be appropriately used. The Research Organisation must confirm to STFC before the start of the grant that they have undertaken appropriate due diligence to ensure that any risks are recognised, understood and treated as necessary. The Research Organisation may be asked to provide evidence that this has been done and may be asked to provide additional information on how the due diligence checks were carried out. **The UK lead research organisation must confirm to STFC that it has undertaken suitable due diligence checks within three months of the start of the grant.**
- 5.5. An agreement between all named partners involved in the project must be signed and a copy sent to the STFC office within three months of the start date.
- 5.6. Collaboration agreements should include details on:
- Transparent budgets and payment schedules to each partner
 - Roles and responsibilities of each partner, communication and leadership structure
 - Description of the contribution of each partner to the project
 - Authorship and use of findings including intellectual property
 - Data management plan for accessing and sharing data by partners
 - How the project will resolve any problems
 - Adherence to the grant Terms and Conditions

6. How to Apply

- 6.1. You should prepare and submit your full proposal using the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk>). Although proposals may be multi-institutional, only one application form should be submitted for each bid.
- 6.2. To create a new proposal, on logging into Je-S, select:

- Research Council – STFC
 - Select the Document type ‘Standard Proposal’
 - Select Scheme ‘Official Development Assistance’
 - Select call ‘STFC GCRF 2018’
- 6.3. Note that clicking ‘Submit document’ on your proposal form in Je-S initially submits the proposal to your host organisation’s administration, not to STFC. Please allow sufficient time for your organisation’s submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the call closing date. **STFC must receive your application by 16:00 on the closing date given above.** If you miss the call deadline STFC will not accept your proposal.
- 6.4. Any co-investigators that will be named on the application must have an individual Je-S account for themselves or will need to create an account in order to be added to an application.

7. Guidance on writing an application - Documents required

- 7.1. The grant application will comprise a Je-S pro-forma and a number of attachments. Details of what is required in each document are given in this section.
- 7.2. The following attachments are mandatory:
- 7.3. **Case for Support**
- 7.3.1. Maximum of six pages:
- Description of the proposed project (maximum three pages);
 - Management plan including risk management strategy (maximum one page);
 - Track record of the applicants (maximum one page).
 - Justification for Resources (maximum one page)
- 7.3.2. Applicants should demonstrate in the Case for Support how a consideration of maximising potential impact in the countries on the DAC list is embedded in their proposed programme of work. Secondary benefits to the UK of this research should also be described, i.e. UK national importance. Please also see the [GCRF ODA guidance](#).
- 7.3.3. The Justification for Resources section should state the full cost of the project and explain why the requested resources are needed, including identifying why the proposal presents value for money. It should include a justification for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, use of pool staff resources and any access to shared facilities and equipment being sought. No justification of Directly Allocated Estates and Indirect Costs is required.

- 7.3.4. Beyond this, the case for support should focus principally on the work to be undertaken. Applicants should describe how impact activities, such as user engagement, will be integrated into the project's programme and methodology. In this document, applicants should particularly focus on when and how impact activities and communication channels will intersect with the research and how they will shape the development of the research programme. Where impact activities (for example, understanding the needs of countries of the DAC list) form a substantive part of the work programme, such as a specific work package or task, this should be noted in this section. However, a full description of such activities and methodologies might be most appropriately detailed in the Pathways to Impact document (see below – Section 10.5).
- 7.3.5. Applications for projects that follow on or evolve from Foundation Awards or other projects should clearly state what has been achieved to date and the added value that will be delivered by extended funding.
- 7.3.6. Applicants should describe the current “state of the art” and set their proposed project in the context of this, e.g. why the selected approach is being proposed in preference to other potential approaches.
- 7.3.7. Applicants should bear in mind that, whilst panel members have their own areas of expertise which collectively cover a wide range of subject areas, the scope of the call is broad. Therefore, the case for support should be pitched at a level that an intelligent, non-specialist audience. This includes avoiding the use of excessive subject-specific abbreviation and acronyms.

7.4. **ODA statement**

- 7.4.1. Maximum one page: describe how the proposed project meets the Official Development Assistance requirements of this call by answering the following questions:
1. Which country/countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal?
 2. How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries?
 3. How do you expect that the outcome of your proposed activities will promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list?
- 7.4.2. In addition to this please include statement of no more than 50 words which concisely encapsulates why the project is ODA compliant. This should be as specific as possible in terms of the challenge the project is addressing, the impact to the country/ies in question and the DAC-list countries involved. This will be used to report on the project to the Department for International

Development who publish the details of projects funded through ODA programmes.

7.4.3. Please indicate whether your project has objectives relating to climate change adaptation, climate change mitigation, desertification, biodiversity or gender.

7.4.4. The one page 'ODA Compliance Statement' must be attached to your proposal as '**Non-UK Components**' type attachment.

7.5. **Pathways to Impact**

7.5.1. Maximum two pages: applicants should present a coherent strategy for maximising the impact of the project in the partner DAC list country. This should focus on the specific methodologies and strategies that will be used to enhance the impact of the proposal. Applicants should demonstrate an understanding of the future development pathway for their proposed activity and show that they have considered the likely next steps for the outcomes. Where a project is developing a technology, applicants should consider how they will obtain any data or evidence they will need, or other appropriate measures they will take to sufficiently de-risk the technology to the point that it will be a suitable prospect for support from translational funding. Public engagement activities may also be an appropriate mechanism for engagement in the DAC list country to advance acceptance and adoption of a novel technology. There is no expectation that all impact activities must be undertaken by the project team, but it is expected that appropriate activities are identified to ensure that project outputs can and will be implemented in the context of the DAC list country.

7.6. **Work plan**

7.6.1. Maximum one page: This should be a simply illustrated work plan such as a Grant chart (or a Programme Evaluation and Review Technique)

7.7. **CVs**

7.7.1. Maximum of two pages for each UK and overseas investigator.

7.8. **Project Partner Letters of support from project partners**

7.8.1. Only if project partners are involved, maximum two pages, guidance can be found on the [STFC website](#). These are important in providing evidence of partner country pull rather than UK push.

7.9. **Data management plan**

7.9.1. Maximum two pages, guidance can be found on the [STFC website](#).

7.10. Application summaries

7.10.1. The 'Summary' and 'Impact Summary' sections will be made available on the Gateway to Research Database. Therefore applicants should ensure that these are written in plain English and any confidential information is not included in these sections.

8. What can be applied for?

8.1. General

8.1.1. All UK costs will be supported at 80% fEC in-line with standard Research Council rules.

8.1.2. Capital equipment, i.e. any single item of equipment over £10,000 in value (including VAT), is **not** an eligible cost for this call. [Consumable costs and small items of equipment](#) are permitted according to STFC standard funding rules.

8.1.3. Funding for fees and stipends for Masters or PhD Studentships is not eligible under this call. Project specific research, travel and subsistence costs for students supported through existing routes may be included.

8.1.4. For projects involving STFC facilities eligible funding includes staff costs, consumables, travel & subsistence and small items of equipment (<£10k).

8.2. Funding available for research partner organisations

8.3. Overseas Co-Investigators and Researchers from research organisations based in countries on the OECD list of ODA recipients are eligible to receive funding through this call. These non-UK organisations will receive funding through the UK lead research organisation; they cannot act as the lead organisation. Non-UK Co-Investigators based in countries other than those on the DAC list are not permitted.

8.4. Overseas costs should only be applied for where they cannot reasonably be covered by existing funding. For example, an overseas Co-Investigator's salary may be fully covered and no UK contribution is required to recompense their time in carrying out the project. In such a case the total number of hours to be charged to the grant over its duration should be shown as zero on the Je-S form, although the hours per week they undertake to contribute to the project should be entered on the form as normal.

8.5. The UK research organisation awarded the grant is responsible for the conduct and administration of the grant. It is accountable for the effective use of public funds, and must therefore ensure that all grant monies are subject to proper financial management processes. It is the research organisation's

responsibility to ensure that expenditure on collaborations in the UK and abroad is subject to robust controls to ensure value for money and propriety; all costs should be fully vouched and maintained for possible inspection and checks by, or on behalf of, STFC. The UK lead research organisation must confirm to STFC that it has undertaken suitable due diligence checks before the start of the grant.

- 8.6. Permissible overseas costs are described in the following table. This table applies only to costs associated with collaborators from research organisations in countries on the DAC list.

| Description of overseas costs – to be entered as exceptions | STFC contribution |
|---|--------------------------|
| Salary costs: For overseas co-investigators and any locally employed Researchers or Technicians directly allocated to the project | 100% |
| Travel and subsistence for overseas Co-Investigators and/or Researchers | 100% |
| Other Directly Incurred costs: This includes costs charged by the overseas organisation and associated with the project, for example consumables, fieldwork, etc. | 100% |
| Other Directly Allocated, Indirect costs at the overseas organisation: We will pay a contribution to these costs, which should be calculated as 20 percent of the total direct costs incurred. | 100% |
| Travel and subsistence (including bench fees) for UK-based researchers going abroad to undertake work: This does not include costs incurred directly by the overseas organisation when the UK researcher is active in that country. | 80% |

8.7. Funding for Project Partners

- 8.7.1. 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 organisation (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 STFC at 100% of direct costs. Total costs associated with third sector bodies' contribution must not exceed 30 per cent of the overall cost of the grant at 100 per cent FEC.
- Government departments and business – International and UK government departments and businesses are not eligible to directly receive funds from the project.

8.8. Sub-contracts

8.8.1. Costs for procurement of goods and services can be requested, including for businesses and government departments.

8.8.2. The costs for subcontractors are tied to the country managing the sub-contract. For example, 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.

8.9. Other Directly Allocated and Indirect costs for International Research Partners

8.9.1. The rates of indirect costs that can be funded on the application by DAC-list country based research partners are up to 20% 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 that is need for significant project-based activities such as telephone 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 STFC.
- 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

8.9.2. Indirect costs should be fully justified in the justification of resources document.

8.10. Entering Overseas Costs

8.10.1. The time allocation of non-UK Co-Is must be entered under “Directly Allocated” but should enter the salary rate as zero. All costs associated with non-UK investigators, whether salary, fieldwork, equipment, indirect costs or

travel and subsistence, must be entered under the relevant heading (i.e. Other Costs, Staff or T&S) and marked as exceptions.

- 8.10.2. All overseas costs must be entered using the following format. In the description box you should enter 'Organisation: Country: Cost Description'. For example:

University of Nairobi: Kenya: 1 x PDRA

University of Nairobi: Kenya: 4 x flights

University of Nairobi: Kenya: 5 x Workshops including catering and accommodation

9. Assessment Process

- 9.1. Proposals will be reviewed and assessed by the GCRF panel involving academics and non-academics from a range of disciplines and countries, according to the assessment criteria. Principal investigators will be invited to respond to the initial review of the proposals before the panel meeting. After the panel meeting applicants will be given brief feedback summarising the reasons why the application was successful/ unsuccessful. No further feedback will be available.
- 9.2. Proposals will be checked by the office and if they do not meet the requirements of the call or the submission guidelines, they will not be sent for review by the panel.

10. Assessment Criteria

10.1. STFC remit

Proposals must demonstrate that they draw on an area of expertise supported by the STFC core science programme (astronomy & space science, particle physics & particle astrophysics, nuclear physics and the computing and accelerator programmes supporting these) or STFC's staff in laboratories and facilities.

10.2. ODA compliance

- Clearly demonstrating that the primary purpose is to promote the economic development and welfare of countries on the DAC list of ODA recipients as its main objective.
- Demonstrable need in partner DAC list country

- Involving genuine and meaningful collaboration between UK and developing-country researchers, as well as relevant key stakeholders.

10.3. Excellence

- Challenge-led and impact-focused projects generating excellent outcomes translatable into real-world outcomes

10.4. Likelihood and scale of Impact

- Realistic pathways to impact with the potential to deliver significant and measurable impacts which takes into account the in-country context and demonstrate a local appetite and capacity to implement solutions
- Understanding of and plans for how to measure the potential impact of the proposed project in the context of the DAC country.
- Relevance and appropriateness of beneficiaries identified and collaborators proposed.
- Sustainability and legacy of the project.
- Secondary benefits to the UK of this research, UK national importance; contribution to STFC's strategy delivery.

10.5. Applicants' ability to deliver the proposed project

- Appropriate skills and experience to deliver the proposed project.
- Appropriate balance of international partnerships.

10.6. Resources and management

- Effectiveness of the proposed planning and management, including risk management strategy.
- Appropriateness of the resources requested and value for money.

11. Appendix 1: Additional Global Challenges Research Fund Conditions

11.1. GAC GCRF 1: ODA Compliance

11.1.1. The GCRF is part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA). Its aim is to support cutting-edge research that addresses challenges faced by developing countries.

11.1.2. The investigators must ensure the research that is undertaken as part of this grant is compliant with ODA rules and regulations as set out by the OECD. In the event that the research is deemed to no longer comply with ODA rules

and regulations the Research Councils reserve the right to terminate the grant.

- 11.1.3. Further information on ODA guidance can be found on the [UK Research and Innovation website](#).

11.2. **GAC GCRF 2: Acknowledgements and reporting**

- 11.2.1. Investigators must assist with any additional reporting requirements throughout the whole lifetime of the grant (during the grant and on completion).

11.3. **GAC GCRF 3: Grant extensions**

- 11.3.1. Notwithstanding grant condition RGC 7, due to GCRF financial restraints, grant extensions will only be considered under exceptional circumstances (in line with the Equality Act 2010) and will require Research Council agreement on a case-by-case basis. The Research Organisation remains responsible for compliance with the terms of the Equality Act 2010 including any subsequent amendments introduced while work is in progress; and for ensuring that the expectations set out in the UK Research and Innovation statement of expectations for equality and diversity are met.

11.4. **GAC GCRF 4: Transfer of funds to UK and overseas organisations**

- 11.4.1. As stated in UK Research and Innovation Terms and Conditions RGC1, the Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring proper financial management of the grant and accountability for the use of public funds.
- 11.4.2. This grant has been awarded on the basis that if any funds are transferred to another UK or overseas organisation then the Research Organisation awarded the grant must undertake due diligence checks to ensure that the funding will be appropriately used (as set out above). The Research Organisation may be asked to provide evidence that where funds have been transferred they have undertaken appropriate due diligence to ensure that any risks are recognised, understood and treated as necessary. The Research Organisation may be asked to provide additional information on how the due diligence checks were carried out.
- 11.4.3. Please refer to the Research Councils for any specific guidance.