



## Global Challenges Research Fund Foundation Awards 2017

STFC – External Innovations & 21st Century Challenges

### Call Guidance

Closing date submission deadline: 16:00 – 05-September-2017

(Call opens 26 July 2017)

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

### STFC contacts:

21st Century Challenges Programme Manager

Katharine Hollinshead

[katharine.hollinshead@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:katharine.hollinshead@stfc.ac.uk)

21st Century Challenges Programme Manager

Stephen Loader

[stephen.loader@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:stephen.loader@stfc.ac.uk)

External Innovations & 21st Century Challenges Grants Manager

Richard Traini

[richard.traini@stfc.ac.uk](mailto:richard.traini@stfc.ac.uk)

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## 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 Research 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. This call is supported through STFC's GCRF allocation. The aim of this activity is to support projects that will access the untapped potential of STFC's community to contribute to addressing challenges in developing countries.
- 1.3. Applications 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 [RCUK 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](mailto:gcrf@stfc.ac.uk)) as early as possible in the process of developing a proposal in order to establish the suitability of their proposal.

## 2. Funding Available and General Principles

2.1. Up to £4m over two years will be available in this call for projects which will lay new foundations and build on existing ones to:

- address challenges faced by Low and/or Middle Income Countries (LMICs) through disciplinary and interdisciplinary projects; and
- strengthen capability for research and innovation in support of economic development and welfare, within both UK and LMICs

2.2. Possible uses of Foundation Awards might include elements of, but are not limited to, the following:

- developing new capacity building and/or research collaborations or partnerships, including training at all career levels (e.g. technician, technologist, doctoral students, postdoctoral researcher, early and mid-career researchers etc);
- partnership building including networks, seminars and workshops to explore and identify areas for cooperation and to enhance the building of partnerships and collaborations, secondments and movement of people (including students) e.g. between UK and overseas research organisations or between research organisations (UK and overseas) and industry/third sector/ Government;
- extending the scope of existing activities for wider application in LMICs;
- exploratory or pump priming research studies for investigation of new approaches and/or generation of preliminary data;
- creating effective pathways to impact in LMICs.

2.3. 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 the LMIC(s).

2.4. When developing proposals, investigators should be mindful of the overall budget of £4m for this call and that STFC aims to fund projects of a range of sizes appropriate to the stage of development of the partnerships and track record in official development activities, including:

- seed corn projects (<£30k, <6 months) for early stage partnership building;  
small projects (<£100k, <12 months) aimed at exploring the needs of LMICs, building collaborations and/or piloting activities;
- larger projects (>£100k, <24 months) where collaboration and proven approaches are established and in a position to deliver long term, sustainable impact targeted at the challenges faced by developing countries.

- 2.5. As an approximate guide we aim to fund three to five larger projects and 15 – 20 smaller projects.
- 2.6. A second call for follow on funding of the most successful projects will be issued for starts in 2019.

## **2.7. Equality of opportunities**

2.7.1. 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](#).

2.7.2. 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 RCUK grants; i.e. be an approved UK Higher Education Institution (HEI), Research Council Institute (RCI) or Independent Research Organisation (IRO) eligible for RCUK funding. Full details of approved RCIs and IROs can be found on the [RCUK 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. 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.
- 3.4. Project proposals should be submitted through a single Je-S application from the lead research organisation only. 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 other institutions/organisations named on that application.

#### 4. Collaborators

- 4.1. Appropriate collaborators and/or project partners in one or more LMIC(s) are a mandatory requirement for proposals for larger projects and are encouraged for small projects. 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 LMICs may be included on proposals. This includes researchers from all countries on the OECD DAC list. We will also support costs associated with activities conducted in LMICs, e.g. consumables, field work. The lead institution and Principal Investigator must be based in the UK. Although proposals may be multi-institutional, only one application form should be submitted for each bid.
- 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.**

## **5. Equipment**

- 5.1. Capital equipment, i.e. any single item of equipment over £10,000 in value (including VAT), is **not** available through this call. [Consumable costs and small items of equipment](#) are permitted according to STFC standard funded rules.

## **6. Studentships**

- 6.1. Funding for new PhD Studentships is not eligible as part of this call, although funds may be used to fund research and travel costs for students supported through existing routes.

## **7. Costs associated with STFC facilities**

- 7.1. For projects involving STFC facilities eligible funding includes staff costs, consumables, travel & subsistence and small items of equipment (<£10k). This scheme has no capital budget and applicants cannot request funds under the Equipment heading: items of equipment dedicated to the project and costing less than £10k should be requested under the 'Other Costs' heading.

## 8. Additional Grant Conditions

- 8.1. 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 to UK and overseas organisations
- 8.2. In particular, applicants should note that the 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 before the start of the grant.**
- 8.3. An agreement between all named partners involved in the project must be signed and a copy sent to the STFC office before the project start date. Where appropriate this should include how IP will be managed. Grants will not be allowed to start until the agreement is seen by the office.
- 8.4. Example model research collaboration agreements that may be used as a basis for specific agreements between partners have been developed through the [Lambert toolkit](#) for collaborative projects.

## 9. How to Apply

- 9.1. 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.
- 9.2. To create a new proposal, on logging into Je-S, select:
  - Research Council – STFC
  - Select the Document type 'Standard Proposal'
  - Select Scheme 'RCUK'
  - Select call 'STFC GCRF Foundation Awards 2017'
- 9.3. 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.
- 9.4. 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.

## **10. Guidance on writing an application - Documents required**

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. The following attachments are mandatory:

### **10.3. Case for Support**

- 10.3.1. Maximum of three pages for small project and up to five pages for larger projects, the section page length guidelines below is for the maximum length:
- 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).
- 10.3.2. Applicants should demonstrate in the Case for Support how a consideration of maximising potential impact in the LMIC(s) 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 [RCUK GCRF ODA guidance](#).
- 10.3.3. 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 LMIC needs) 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).

### **10.4. ODA statement**

- 10.4.1. 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?

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

## **10.5. Pathways to Impact**

10.5.1. Maximum two pages: applicants should present a coherent strategy for maximising the impact of the project in the partner LMIC(s). 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 LMIC 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 LMIC(s) context.

## **10.6. Gantt chart for work plan**

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

## **10.7. Justification of resources**

10.7.1. Maximum one page: 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.

## **10.8. CVs**

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

## **10.9. Project Partner Letters of support from project partners**

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10.9.1. Only if project partners are involved, maximum two pages, guidance can be found on the [STFC website](#).

**10.10. Data management plan**

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

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## 11. Overseas costs

- 11.1. Overseas Co-Investigators and Researchers from research organisations based in LMICs 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 LMICs are not permitted.
- 11.2. Applicants should seek contributions from project partners, e.g., business, government and third sector organisations where appropriate. In acknowledgment of the fact, some smaller third sector organisations do not have the capacity to co-fund research activities, costs to support partners from third sector organisations, e.g., NGOs are eligible under this call. This includes costs for staff salaries, travel and subsistence, other direct costs and overheads. Costs will be funded at 100 per cent FEC and should be entered as exceptions on J-eS form. 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.
- 11.3. Overseas costs should only be applied for where they cannot reasonably be covered by existing funding. For example, an overseas Co-Investigators 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.
- 11.4. 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.
- 11.5. Permissible overseas costs are described in the following table. This table applied only to costs associated with collaborators from research organisations in LMICs.

Description of overseas costs	STFC contribution
<p><b>Salary costs:</b> For overseas co-investigators and any locally employed Researchers or Technicians, i.e. percentage contribution of actual salary, should be entered under the appropriate Investigator or Staff section of the Je-S form, In each case these costs must be marked as an Exception</p>	100%
<p><b>Travel and subsistence for overseas Co-Investigators and/or Researchers:</b> These costs should be entered under Directly Incurred costs as usual but marked as an Exception.</p>	100%
<p><b>Other Directly Incurred costs:</b> This includes costs charged by the overseas organisation and associated with the project, for example consumables, fieldwork, etc. These costs should be entered as usual but marked as an Exception.</p>	100%
<p><b>Other Directly Incurred – Indirect and Estates costs at the overseas organisation:</b> We will pay a contribution to these costs, which should be calculated as <b>20 percent</b> of the overseas research organisation's staff costs, including Investigators, Researchers, and Researcher Co-Investigators <b>only</b>. This total should be entered as a separate item under Other DI costs and marked as an Exception.</p>	100%
<p><b>Travel and subsistence (including bench fees) for UK-based researchers going abroad to undertake work:</b> This does not include costs incurred directly by the overseas organisation when the UK researcher is active in that country.</p>	80%

## 12. Assessment Process

- 12.1. Proposals will be assessed by an expert panel involving academics from a range of disciplines and with inter-disciplinary expertise as well as beneficiaries and users, according to the assessment criteria. Applicants will be given brief feedback summarising the reasons why the application was successful/ unsuccessful. No further feedback will be available. As this is an expert panel, there will be not external peer review of PI responses.
- 12.2. 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.

## 13. Assessment Criteria

### 13.1. Stage gate criteria

- In order to be considered fundable proposals must meet [ODA requirements](#) by clearly demonstrating that the primary purpose is to promote the economic development and welfare of LMICs on the DAC list of ODA recipients as its main objective.
- Proposals must also 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.
- In addition to these two stage gate criteria, proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

### 13.2. Quality

- Ambition, adventure and transformative aspects identified.
- Appropriateness of the proposed methodology.
- Science.

### 13.3. Importance and Impact

- International development importance of the project, in particular the need in partner LMIC.
- Secondary benefits to the UK of this research, UK national importance; contribution to STFC's strategy delivery.
- Quality of the impact pathways described to facilitate impacts of the project in LMIC(s).
- Understanding of and plans for how to measure the potential impact of the proposed project in the LMIC context.

- Relevance and appropriateness of beneficiaries identified and collaborators proposed.

**13.4. Applicants' ability to deliver the proposed project**

- Balance of skills of the proposed project team.
- Appropriateness of international partnerships or ability to develop these.

**13.5. Resources and management**

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

## **14. Appendix 1: Additional Global Challenges Research Fund Conditions**

### **14.1. GAC GCRF 1: ODA Compliance**

- 14.1.1. 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.
- 14.1.2. 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.
- 14.1.3. Further information on ODA guidance can be found on the [RCUK website](#).

### **14.2. GAC GCRF 2: Acknowledgements and reporting**

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

### **14.3. GAC GCRF 3: Grant extensions**

- 14.3.1. 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 RCUK statement of expectations for equality and diversity are met.

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

- 14.4.1. As stated in RCUK 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.
- 14.4.2. 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

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Research Organisation may be asked to provide additional information on how the due diligence checks were carried out.

14.4.3. Please refer to the Research Councils for any specific guidance.

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