

UK Research  
and Innovation



## **UKRI-GCRF Collective Programme Climate Resilience Network Development Scoping call**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Last updated: February 2020

#### **Important changes to the Je-S Form**

Following UKRI's announcement regarding Pathways to Impact, applicants will no longer be required to provide a 'Pathways to Impact' statement or complete an 'Impact Summary' section within grant applications from 1 March 2020. The Je-S Guidance for this particular call no longer contains references to these sections and you are unlikely to see them in Je-S. However, as the system change implementation will be using a phased approach, they may still be visible to you.

If Je-S still asks you to complete the Impact Summary section, just type N/A in the text field. Likewise, if 'Pathways to Impact' is still showing as a mandatory attachment just upload a blank document containing the text N/A.

Further information regarding these changes can be found on the [UKRI website](#), if you have any queries please contact [climateresilience@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:climateresilience@esrc.ukri.org)

#### **About the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF)**

##### **What is GCRF?**

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.

##### **Does GCRF replace other research funding initiatives focused on international development challenges?**

No. GCRF is not replacing any existing initiatives, and is part of a suite of implementation mechanisms announced as part of the UK Aid Strategy. ESRC funding to address development challenges will continue to be awarded through schemes such as the Newton

Fund, our strategic partnership with DFID, and other multilateral programmes with other UK research councils. The scientific and geographic focus, as well as eligibility and delivery mechanisms, for each of these schemes may differ, and applicants should make sure they submit their proposal to the most appropriate scheme.

## **Official Development Assistance (ODA)**

### **What is ODA?**

ODA stands for Official Development Assistance. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) sets the international standard for defining and registering ODA. The DAC defines ODA as “those flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions which are:

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

[www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm)

### **What is the DAC list and which countries are on it?**

The DAC List of ODA Recipients shows all countries and territories eligible to receive ODA. These consist of all low and middle income countries (LMICs) based on gross national income (GNI) per capita as published by the World Bank, with the exception of G8 members, EU members, and countries with a firm date for entry into the EU. The list also includes all of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as defined by the United Nations. The DAC List presents countries and territories in groups, but all countries listed are eligible to receive ODA and therefore relevant to GCRF funding.

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 current DAC list is available online at [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm)

Please note: Policy on ODA funding is under review and may affect this call. If applicants are planning to include Chinese partners, please contact the ESRC office for further guidance **before submitting your proposal.**

### **Does my proposal meet ODA requirements?**

Only grants that comply with ODA requirements can be funded under GCRF calls. The definition of ODA eligible research provided by the OECD makes clear that the primary purpose must be to promote the economic growth or welfare of developing countries (see [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/methodology.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/methodology.htm)).

When trying to decide whether an activity meets ODA requirements, it is important to focus on the questions typically asked by the OECD. Questions you may wish to consider when writing your proposal include:

- Is the project addressing the economic development and welfare of an ODA-eligible country?
- Is there a development need that my project or activity is addressing?
- Are the countries involved on the DAC List of ODA Recipients, or will countries on the DAC list directly benefit from the research?
- Would this project or activity be applied in an ODA-eligible country – in which case when, how and with whom?
- What would the impact of the project or activity be, and who would benefit?
- How does the project or activity contribute to sustainable development?
- What would success for this activity look like?
- How would success or impact be measured?

Applicants should ensure they have considered existing advice on ODA requirements. Any queries about the ODA eligibility of projects should be raised with the ESRC contact named in the call specification document before submitting an application.

### **How do I demonstrate that my proposal meets ODA requirements?**

Applicants must clearly articulate their impact plans, demonstrating how they meet ODA requirements throughout their ‘case for support’ attachment. In addition, all proposals must include a two-page attachment addressing the following four questions:

1. Which country/ countries on the OECD DAC list of ODA recipients (DAC list) will directly benefit from this proposal and are these countries likely to continue to be eligible to receive ODA for the duration of the research?
2. How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries? Please provide evidence of the development need and articulate how the proposed activity is appropriate to address this need.
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?
4. What approach(es) you will use to deliver development impact within the lifetime of the project and in the longer -term. Please consider the potential outcomes, the key beneficiary and stakeholder groups and how they will be engaged to enable development impact to be achieved.

The research councils reserve the right to reject applications that do not respond to all four questions. Initial assessment of ODA compliance will take place within ESRC, though final decisions may include input from commissioning panels as well as external sources of ODA expertise. We expect applicants to refer closely to ODA guidance as part of preparing their proposal.

### **Does my research have to take place in a DAC list country?**

Whilst the expectation is that the majority of research will take place in a DAC list country, we recognise that there will be cases where research relevant to DAC list countries will

take place elsewhere. The key to ODA compliance is what the primary purpose of the research is, and where the benefits of the research are expected to be experienced. Where research is conducted, or where research participants are from, are not necessary or sufficient indications of whether or not research meets ODA requirements.

The primary purpose of any GCRF research must be to promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list. Any benefit to the UK or any other non-DAC list country can only be a secondary consideration: the primary benefit must be to a country or countries on the DAC list. Not all research conducted in DAC list countries will meet these criteria, but some research involving non-DAC list countries may. Applicants will therefore need to carefully consider how they demonstrate ODA compliance regardless of where their proposed research takes place.

**Are proposals relevant across more than one country eligible?**

Unless otherwise stated in scheme-specific guidance, proposals may be relevant to one or multiple countries on the DAC list.

**Are there priority countries on the DAC list for GCRF?**

There are no priority countries within GCRF. All countries on the DAC list are eligible except those which are flagged as likely to graduate from the DAC list during the course of the proposed research project.

**What happens if a country is flagged as likely to graduate from the DAC list during the course of the proposed research project?**

The DAC list includes footnotes which indicate which countries are likely to graduate from the list and when, subject to certain conditions. If a country is flagged as likely to graduate it should not be the primary focus of a proposal, although it can be included as an additional case study or comparison. In such proposals the primary purpose of the research should be to promote the development and welfare of a developing country **not** due to graduate from the list.

**Can my impact-generating and knowledge exchange-related activities focus on international organisations and/or international non-governmental organisations (INGOs)?**

The impact-generating and knowledge exchange related activities must be focused on a DAC list country or countries, and if the applicants intend to generate impact via international organisations or INGOs they should explain why this is likely to lead to greater impacts than working directly with stakeholders in-country. Impacts should be targeted at specific DAC list countries and should not depend on the trickle down of a global public good.

**Is research on refugees in non-DAC list countries eligible?**

Research on refugees in non-DAC list countries may be eligible if it otherwise falls within the scope of the call.

For research to be ODA eligible, the primary purpose of the research must clearly promote the economic development and welfare of a developing country or countries. Therefore,

where the research takes place or where the subjects participating in the research are from does not automatically make a project ODA-eligible

If you aim to carry out research on refugees in non-DAC list countries, you must follow the following OECD's ODA criteria for it to be deemed eligible:

- The research focuses on refugees and/or asylum seekers (as defined in page 12 of the OECD's guidance [here](#)) from DAC list countries
- Research on refugees will only be deemed as ODA compliant if it focuses on the temporary sustenance of the refugees, ie the first 12 months from the date of their application for asylum, or, alternatively, their date of entry into the country through a resettlement programme, or their date of entry into a country upon the acceptance of an application for family reunification
- Research will not be deemed ODA compliant if it is focused on the more permanent nature of refugees (ie passing the 12 months' threshold), on promoting their integration or settlement into the economy of the host (non-DAC list) country, for the resettlement of refugees to another donor country, for voluntary repatriation (after the first 12 months) or for the return of rejected asylum seekers

Please note the above list is not exhaustive. For the complete criteria, please see the [OECD DAC High Level Communique](#) If you have any doubt, please do get in touch with the ESRC office.

## **Eligibility and costs**

### **Does the lead research organisation have to be based in the UK?**

No. Research proposals can be led by a principal investigator based at a research organisation that is eligible for UKRI funding (See <https://www.ukri.org/funding/how-to-apply/eligibility/>) or any established overseas research organisation. Proposals can be submitted by researchers who are not established members of the proposed host institution. By submitting the proposal, the research organisation is confirming that, in the event of an award, they guarantee to provide facilities for the PI (as if they were an established member of staff) for the duration of the award.

### **Are there limitations to the number of Co-Is or partners and is there a limit on individuals from the same institution?**

There is no limit to the number of co-investigators or partners. There is also no limit to the number of individuals from the same institution being included on the proposal.

### **Can I include researchers from outside the UK as co-investigators?**

Academic researchers (at PhD or equivalent status) from an established overseas research organisation of comparable standing to a UK research organisation will be eligible to be listed as an international co-investigator under GCRF Collective Fund Programme calls.

Please refer to [ESRC's international co-investigator policy](#) for further information, noting that the 30% cap on costs will not apply (this is explained in detail in the call specification.)

### **What are the eligibility criteria for international co-investigators?**

ESRC would not expect to see costs of more than 30% of total costs requested go to non-UK non-DAC-list countries. We strongly encourage international co-investigators from countries not on, or likely to graduate from, the DAC list to make a significant contribution to their own research costs. Please see the [Costs incurred by non-UK institutions and partners](#) document for more information on non-UK non-DAC list organisation costs.

### **Can international NGOs be included as co-investigators?**

Unfortunately, international NGOs are not eligible to be included as co-investigators on proposals, however they can be included as project partners or employed on a consultancy basis.

### **How can I include a UK non-academic (business, third sector or government) partner?**

When a principal investigator includes a third sector co-investigator on their application, they must ensure that all associated costs are fully justified within the Justification of Resources attachment. The ESRC will fund 100% of justified costs; however, the project costs associated with these types of Co-I contributions must not exceed 30% of the overall cost of the grant (at 100% fEC). **Government departments and businesses are not eligible to directly receive funds on the awards.**

### **How can I include an overseas non-academic (business, third sector or government) partner?**

While non-academic partners from outside the UK, including DAC list countries, are not eligible to be included as co-investigators, they can be included as project partners or employed on a consultancy basis. These should be entered on the proposal as Other DI Costs at 80% fEC. It will be up to the project team to decide on and justify the specific required involvement within the proposal. **Government departments and businesses are not eligible to directly receive funds on the awards.**

### **Can associated studentships be funded through this call?**

No, studentships costs are not eligible for this call.

### **What is the expected size and scope of the Network Plus awards?**

Successful applicants to this Network Scoping call will be invited to apply for a second-stage Network Plus award. Whereas the final confirmation of the funding and scope for these has yet to be confirmed we envisage them to be in the region of £1.5 million over 2 years.

### **Can I apply to more than one GCRF call?**

Yes, but you must have the capacity to undertake all grants applied for, should they be successful, without exceeding your contracted hours.

### **Can I apply as a principal investigator more than once to this call?**

No, applicants can only be principal investigator on one application to this call. There is no restriction on the number of applications an individual can be co-investigator for, but they must have the capacity to undertake all projects applied for, should they be successful.

## **Gender Equality**

### **Why only gender? Why are other characteristics not targeted?**

Ensuring Official Development Assistance (ODA) is provided in a way that is 'likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender' is the purpose of this procedure to ensure that ODA funding provided by UKRI is compliant. However, inclusive research and innovation extends beyond gender to include other characteristics. Not only is it seen as best practice, to insure inclusive research and innovation, but it is also considered as the 'right thing to do'. Intersectionality between gender and other characteristics, such as race or age, is also something to be mindful of. For example, men in certain classes may have different experiences, requirements and needs compared to men in other classes. Being considerate to other characteristics and intersectionality is important to ensure excellent research, which is of high quality, impactful, implementable and sustainable. Being considerate to other characteristics and intersectionality is important to ensure excellent research and innovation, which is of high quality, impactful and implementable and sustainable.

### **Is gender just about women?**

Gender equality is about ensuring the voices and needs of everyone, regardless of the gender a person may identify as. Historically, gender equality has been referred to as 'women's issues' as women have been the driving force behind gender equality policies with the focus being on enhancing the power and autonomy of women. However, to achieve gender equality, the full participation of all genders is needed. Considering gender is more about understanding local gender dynamics rather than focusing on women, especially for international development research and innovation. Recognising gender norms, identifying missed opportunities and looking for ways to work with all spans across all genders, rather than just focussing on women.

### **Gender isn't relevant to my project, nor is it a priority. How can I provide a Gender Equality Statement?**

When designing and delivering international development research and innovation in a way that is impactful and sustainable, almost all decisions made already consider local context and dynamics – including gender – whether explicitly or not. If your research and innovation involves a project team made up of people, involves research participation, involves human samples, benefits people, impacts on people's lives, etc., then gender is relevant to your project. By providing a Gender Equality Statement, you can demonstrate how you have shown meaningful consideration to gender within their project. However, it is expected that some projects will have less impact on gender and gender relations and professional judgement of the applicants should be exercised to ensure appropriate consideration of the context and intended aims of the project. However, it is expected that some projects will have less impact on gender and gender relations and professional judgement of the applicants should be exercised to ensure appropriate consideration of the context and intended aims of the project.

**What are some of the barriers to achieving gender equality, and how might these be mitigated?**

Within your proposal, you should try to identify any potential barriers to achieving gender equality and put measures in place to mitigate these. Although some barriers may be more relevant or specific to the field the proposed project is in, the local context of the research and innovation and/or the practices used, there are some common potential barriers. For example, no costs built in for care costs which may be incurred as a result of a researcher/innovator travelling overseas with a dependent when undertaking fieldwork, having an external advisory board without a gender balance, unequal or non-proportional representation of voices or participation for people of different genders. Identifying potential barriers from the offset, allows project teams to consider how to mitigate or monitor these, for example, ensuring costs associated with caring duties are costed into the application (often costs that tend to be borne by female researchers/innovators), setting targets for representation of underrepresented genders, collecting information of the gender of research participants, etc.