UKRI-GCRF Collective Programme
Climate Resilience Network Development Scoping call

Call Specification

Summary

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), on behalf of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and the Department for International Development (DfID), are pleased to invite applications for Climate Resilience Network Development Scoping grants.

Funding has been allocated from the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) which is a £1.5 billion fund to support cutting-edge research which addresses the problems faced by developing countries. GCRF will address global challenges through disciplinary and interdisciplinary research and will strengthen capability for research and innovation within both the UK and developing countries, providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need. GCRF forms part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment, and funds will be awarded in a manner that fits with ODA guidelines.

This will be the first of three calls within the theme of Climate Resilience which respond to the UN Climate Action Summit and will form part of the wider UKRI GCRF Collective Programme and DfID's CLimate And REsilience Framework Programme (CLARE). Successful teams will be invited to apply for a second stage round of larger Climate Resilience Network Plus awards to co-design solutions. A call for applications for the position of Climate Resilience Knowledge Manager to provide support to the successful scoping projects will be launched shortly.

Exceptionally, for this call, principal investigators based at established overseas research organisations are eligible to apply in addition to those from UK organisations that are eligible for UKRI funding.

Applications are invited up to a maximum value of **£200,000** (100% fEC) and **15 months** duration. Successful applicants will be eligible to apply for Network Plus stage of the process which will be launched in 2021.

Proposals should be submitted via the Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S) by the **deadline of 16:00 UK time on 25 March 2020.** Projects should commence on **1 October 2020.**

Background and scope

The [Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF)](#) is 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.

The Collective Programme under the UKRI GCRF Collective Fund is a series of calls designed to enhance the coherence, strategic focus and overall impact across the six strategic GCRF Challenge portfolios:

- Cities and Sustainable Infrastructure
- Education
- Food Systems
- Global Health
- Resilience to Environmental Shocks and Change
- Security Protracted Conflict, Refugee Crises and Forced Displacement

The programme is being delivered by UKRI and steered by the [GCRF Challenge Leaders](#). Interdisciplinary research excellence is central to the GCRF and Investigators from all disciplines are encouraged to apply for calls within the parameters of each call regardless of the primary discipline focus. This collaboration between DfID and GCRF will maximise scope for outputs to influence future programming and research to enhance the lives of people at risk living in developing countries through strengthening resilience to compound climate risks. All proposals received will be shared with other constituent parts of UKRI as necessary to assist with processing. This Network Development Scoping call will be managed by ESRC on behalf of all UKRI research councils and DfID. Further information about the ESRC's approach to GCRF and details of other current GCRF calls is available on our [website](#).

Call details

A step change is needed in both adaption and the strengthening of resilience of the poor and marginalised to climate risks. Climate change has the greatest impact on these groups when it interacts with other risk drivers and consequences including economic shocks, social or political conflict, population displacement, resource and environmental pressures as well as ecological collapse. Life for the poor and marginalised in rural and urban contexts exposed to climate change is dominated by decisions or forced acts that trade-off one risk for another, this is most extreme for women and children, those with disabilities and for ethnic or religious minorities exposed to social and political exclusion and violence. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) identify resilience as a key mechanism for Eradicating Poverty (SDG1) as well as a strategic element of Climate Action (SDG13).

The [UNDRR Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) is illustrative of a global demand for resilience to extend from the direct impacts of climate change to encompass the more challenging compound effects of climate change and development. The Framework recognises the increasing impact of disasters and their complexity in many parts of the world, and that many recent disasters have exceeded national response capacities.

DfID's [CLimate And REsilience Framework Programme (CLARE)](#) sets out an ambitious multi-year programme of applied research. The results and partnerships from this call will support the evolution and outcomes from CLARE, providing a direct line of sight to global policy impact. Beyond GCRF-DfID collaboration, close alignment with the UNDRR Sendai Framework and the Global Risk Assessment Framework (GRAF) will provide an opportunity to inform global thinking and policy articulation.

The compound nature of complex climate risk opens this call to inputs from all GCRF and DfID portfolio areas. The call will be complementary to several existing investments including the [DfID/NERC Science for Humanitarian Emergencies and Resilience programme](#) which seeks to reduce vulnerability through improved understanding of risk; [NERC's Multi-Hazard and Systemic Risk call](#) which seeks to understand the drivers of multi-hazard events and how the impacts of these events cascade through socio-economic systems, and; [ESRC's Equitable Resilience call](#) which explored how climate change adaptation, humanitarian action, risk management and resilience could enable pathways for transition to sustainable development.

Research will be supported that improves climate risk characterisation and identifies and explores network-held risk associated with climate events, in order to enhance understanding and policy development in contexts where multiple decision-makers are acting on intersecting risks. In local contexts the themes outlined below will be deployed and capacity built to include marginalised natural resource-dependent societies exposed to climate and associated conflict risks, including displacement; poor urban communities exposed to climate change impacts through changing dynamics of public health, disaster risk and land tenure. Decision-making at other scales is as important, for example on the behaviour of global and national organisations regulating or speculating on food commodity prices when exposed to climate shocks, and scope for national or local resilience building among developing countries.

Climate Resilience Network Development Scoping grants are intended to support the building of new researcher-practitioner-policy maker teams to search for novel solutions for complex climate risks. Successful teams will be invited to apply for a second stage round of larger Climate Resilience Network Plus awards to co-design solutions. The Climate Resilience Knowledge Manager (call for applications to be advertised separately) will support both stages through mentoring on co-production methods, enabling interaction across grants and with associated GCRF and DfID activity.

Themes:
The call is structured around 3 non-exclusive, themes, with successful projects expected to deploy at least one or, ideally more, approach. These draw on existing research frontiers addressing multiple risk problems – sometimes described as wicked problems - for which no one solution is readily available. Such problems require interdisciplinary approaches to observe, analyse and interpret complex scenarios and to facilitate the voice of multiple stakeholders through which new relationships can be built for practical outcomes that are informed, inclusive and integrate across policy domains. This requires excellent science working in innovative ways with research users. The 3 themes, all addressing the consequences of climate change, are: (1) system behaviours and responses including the

amplifying or dampening effect of external pressures; (2) Institutional capacity for decision-making across risk domains; (3) Managing complexity in disaster response and recovery.

(1) System behaviours and responses including the amplifying or dampening effect of external pressures; e.g. identification of metrics and observation systems to systematically track direct and indirect loss and damage including intangibles to describe the ways in which connectivity within livelihood or production systems shape loss spreading, or containment, between sectors and implications for poverty. This could include local systems, e.g. to track loss spreading or containment within livelihood or production systems and value chains; or global e.g. focusing on tracking the functioning the macroeconomics of commodity market speculation following climate events that intensify food insecurity for the poor in LMICs.

(2) Institutional capacity for decision-making across risk domains; e.g. to optimise of risk trade-offs including through the consideration of social justice and ecological integrity; the institutional context and cascading implications for wellbeing of forced decision-making, especially amongst the poor. This is especially important for making resilience more sensitive to gender and intersectionality and working with decision-makers to consider trade-offs operating over different scales of time and space and dis-articulated geographies.

(3) Managing complexity in disaster response and recovery; e.g. complex management of emergencies involving multiple agencies, local priorities and timescales of responsibility at the nexus of food and water insecurity, conflict, displacement and environmental crisis.

This call follows a two-stage Network Plus model to stimulate a wide range of in-depth empirical contexts and to maximise scope for growing challenge-based global leadership groups. It is designed as part of a joint GCRF initiative with DFID to allow for problem definition at the interface of existing research/policy communities; the adaptation of networks in response to emerging empirical and policy demands; and the cross-fertilisation of networks with one another and associated GCRF and DFID programmes. It will bring together what have been mainly exclusive topics: a) largely sectoral resilience to climate change; and b) the compound experience of risk and risk management deployed by the poor. Beyond a focus on LMICs, there are no geographical, scale or topic constraints in the scoping of the networks; diversity is to be welcomed. These are not exclusive, applicants can propose additional strategies.

The call will support up to 8 Network Scoping awards which will lead to up to 4 full Network Plus awards following a later invitation only commissioning phase. The Network Scoping awards will run from October 2020.

Research Ethics
All GCRF projects must be underpinned by a strong research ethic based on mutual respect and understanding for different cultural, ethnic, social and economic beliefs and practices. Solutions to any development challenge(s) must be rooted in, and acceptable to, the institutions, communities and societies where they will operate.
Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass areas where regulation and approval processes exist as well as areas where they do not. Applicants must ensure that the proposed research will be carried out to a high ethical standard and must clearly state how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the research

commences and all risks are minimised. More guidance can be found in the [ESRC Framework for Research Ethics](#).

Capacity Building

An important aspect of GCRF is capacity development, UKRI and DfID strongly encourage all proposals to this call to identify research capacity-building activities as part of, and not separate to, the approach towards the network development The focus should be on the quality and impact of the activity of the project, and how increasing capacity contributes to this. Examples of building capacity include:

- opportunities for those with relevant skills who have not previously worked on development relevant research projects to orient their research towards global issues
- support and mentoring for more junior team members
- co-design of research and related activity, and implementation with developing country partner staff

Please note that studentships are not eligible under this call. Further information on capacity development in relation to GCRF is available on the [ESRC website](#).

Equitable Partnerships

Partnerships are a key pillar of the GCRF strategy. UKRI developed the following statement of expectation for research partnerships in consultation with researchers from East Africa. "Partnerships should be transparent and based on mutual respect. Partnerships should aim to have clearly articulated equitable distribution of resources, responsibilities, efforts and benefits. Partnerships should recognising different inputs, different interests and different desired outcomes and should ensure the ethical sharing and use of data which is responsive to the identified needs of society."

Funding

Applications are invited up to a maximum value of **£200,000 (100% fEC) and 15 months duration.** Please see Je-S Guidance for more information regarding costs and eligibility.

Successful projects will be eligible to apply for the second (Network Plus) stage of the process which will be launched in 2021.

Funding of international Co-Investigators

GCRF calls will follow standard ESRC policies in that they will fund 100% of the justified costs for international co-investigators from established research organisations. ESRC's policy on the [inclusion of international co-investigators](#) will apply, with the exception that for the GCRF Collective Fund Programme calls **there is no cap on costs** associated with international co-investigators' contribution relative to the total project cost; no upper limit will be applied. This applies to all international co-investigators from all countries, whether on the [DAC list](#) or not, but all costs need to be fully justified.

We strongly encourage international co-investigators from countries not on the DAC list to make a significant contribution to their own research costs. Please see FAQ document for more information on non-UK non-DAC list organisation costs. If a co-investigator is from a country flagged as likely to graduate from the DAC list during the course of the project this should be treated as a country NOT on the DAC list.

The overhead rate for DAC list country co-investigators is **up to 20%** of the total direct costs (e.g. staff costs, T&S, conferences) incurred by that organisation. If a co-investigator is from a country flagged as likely to graduate from the DAC list during the course of the project this should be treated as a country NOT on the DAC list.

Further guidance is provided in the call-specific Je-S Guidance.

ODA compliance statement

To comply with ODA requirements, proposals must make clear how their primary purpose is to promote the economic development and welfare of a developing country or countries. There are no priority countries, proposals may relate to any country or countries on the DAC list except those which are flagged as likely to graduate from the list during the course of the proposed project. If a country is flagged as likely to graduate it cannot be the primary focus of a proposal, although it can be included as an additional case study or comparison.

Applicants must clearly articulate their impact plans, demonstrating how they meet ODA requirements throughout their 'Case for Support' submission. In addition, all proposals must include a mandatory 'Non-UK Components' 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.

Further guidance on how to submit the ODA compliance statement as an attachment is provided in the call-specific Je-S Guidance. General advice on ODA and links to other useful sources of information are provided on the [ESRC website](#) and UKRI guidance on ODA in relation to GCRF is available [here](#).

Initial ODA compliance assessment will take place within the ESRC, though final decisions may include input from commissioning panels as well as external sources of ODA expertise.

ODA transparency and reporting

As part of the government's commitment to ODA transparency and in line with DfID ODA reporting requirements, UKRI is responsible for publishing information about UKRI ODA

grants including project titles and summaries via the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) registry and via DFID's national statistics. The purpose of publishing information via the IATI registry is to make information about ODA easily accessible to governments, stakeholders and other relevant groups in beneficiary countries. All UKRI funded projects from this programme will be published in this way. Please therefore write your project title and summary in such a way that they are meaningful and accessible to non-specialist audiences, following publication. We would be grateful if you would ensure that the project title and summary are written in plain English and avoid the use of jargon, acronyms, puns and plays on words. Please also make clear in your project title and summary how your project is ODA compliant, for example by identifying the development challenge(s) being addressed, the aims of the project and the beneficiary countries.

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**.

Eligibility
Lead research organisation – exceptionally, for this call, principal investigators based at established overseas research organisations **are eligible** to apply in addition to those from UK organisations that are eligible for UKRI funding. Proposals may be submitted by individuals who are not established members of the proposed host institution. In these circumstances, by submitting the proposal the RO confirms that it guarantees to provide facilities for the applicant as if an established member of staff for the duration of the grant**.** The lead organisation will be responsible for the overall management of the award including control, disbursement and assurance of funds, including financial reporting of funds going overseas.

Co-investigators may be based anywhere in the world, but the international co-investigator's research organisation must submit a 'Letter of Support'. (Further information is provided within the Je-S guidance.) This is to ensure comparability of standing between international organisations and UKRI recognised UK research organisations and to ensure research capacity and commitment to the project.

The ESRC does not allow the resubmission of previously unsuccessful proposals to any schemes, unless the applicant has been explicitly invited to do so.

Due Diligence
As part of UKRI funding assurance, non-UK research organisations which have successful applications will be required to complete a UKRI Overseas Due Diligence Questionnaire.

For UK organisations hosting non-UK co-investigators, due diligence checks are for UKRI's assurance purposes only and do not replace the due diligence requirements of the lead organisation. However, when obtaining information from non-UK research organisations UKRI will request permission to share the information provided with the lead organisation. The lead organisation can then use this information for their own due diligence processes should they wish.

Safeguarding
UKRI condemns all forms of harm and abuse, including bullying and harassment. We take a

zero tolerance approach to harm and abuse to any individual employed through or associated with our programmes in all contexts; whether in humanitarian or fragile and conflict-affected settings, in other field contexts, or within the international or UK research and development community which we fund. We expect institutions to promote the highest standards in organisational culture, and have in place the systems and procedures required to prevent and tackle all incidents of harm and abuse. Applications must detail how they will identify and manage safeguarding risks and what policies and procedures will be in place to enable reporting and investigation of allegations when they arise.

Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to report research outcomes on Researchfish in line with standard UKRI Terms and Conditions. In addition to the standard outcomes all award holders will need to complete sections under the 'GCRF Collective Fund' outcomes.

Assessment criteria

Applications to this call will be assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

Capacity building and International partnerships

- Assessment will consider the degree and quality of pathways to engagement with appropriate developing country partners (including researchers, practitioners and policy makers) and how they would play a leading role in challenge identification and the design and implementation of a future Network Plus project.
- The proposal should identify an appropriate range of relevant partners, demonstrating how these partnerships are beneficial to the award, ethical, equitable and sustainable beyond the initial award. For example, is their engagement meaningful, substantive and clear? How motivated are they by the potential benefit of the research for them?
- The applicant should clearly articulate to what extent the award will lead to new or enhanced research capacity for addressing international development challenges in the relevant partner countries. For example, is the proposal informed by evidence of previous impact research?

Impact
- Assessment will consider the clarity and significance of the impact from the scoping activities proposed. Does the proposed award identify realistic pathways with the potential to deliver a breadth of highly significant and measurable impacts?
- Have the applicants taken into consideration relevant developing country contexts and demonstrated local appetite and capacity to implement solutions? Is there potential for the partnerships, resources, capacity and capability to be developed through a future Network Plus and be sustained and strengthened beyond the end of the award?
- What are the benefits for the researchers and non-academics taking part? Will the project inform future research, establish or strengthen relationships with partners, or increase impact from research already undertaken?

Management capability and strength of the proposed award
- Reviewers and panel members will assess the applicant's capacity to manage the project by considering whether they have demonstrated the appropriate skills and experience to

deliver the proposed vision and effectively develop the award through to a future Network Plus proposal.

- Is there a demonstrable expertise across the relevant areas of the call and beyond? Is there an appropriate balance of leadership and management between the proposed partnerships, including an appropriate balance between developed and developing country partners?
- Does the proposed future Network Plus have the potential to act as an exemplar of research excellence and innovation in the field, to define and drive forward the agenda for the role of interdisciplinary research in international development?

Quality and coherence of the proposed activities
- Assessment will consider the quality and coherence of the activities proposed and determine whether they meet the requirements of the GCRF, particularly in relation to ODA compliance.
- Are the activities proposed appropriate to the impact opportunity identified? Are the aims of the project realistic/achievable? Is there a clear explanation for the scale, timing and resources requested?
- Does the proposal demonstrate flexibility to adapt over the lifetime of the award with a clear view of building a future Network Plus which will respond with agility to opportunities arising? Does the proposal outline an appropriate framework for monitoring and evaluation, and identify a robust set of deliverables, indicators and measures for success?

Value for money and sustainability
- Assessment will consider whether the proposed award is good value for money i.e. the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcome. This will include 'economy' considerations (the cost of inputs such as meeting room hire, procuring services), 'efficiency' measures such as the number of participants that benefit, and 'outcome' measures such as the extent to which a positive change has taken place.
- Is the scale of impacts reasonable for the funding requested and staff time included? Are activity costs reasonable? Is the partnership building potential of the project, the likely contribution to the utilisation of knowledge, and the wider societal benefits commensurate with the requested resources?
- Is there a clear plan for further developing the project and/or its outputs into a future Network Plus award?

Applications will be considered by a specially convened panel of academic and non-academic experts at a meeting in June 2020 with the funders reserving the right to shortlist proposals for assessment in the event of a high number of applications being received. The panel will be asked to assess the proposals against the fit to the call and the assessment criteria above. The panel will then make formal recommendations to the funders. Funding decisions are expected to be announced in July 2020 and awards are expected to commence on 1 October 2020. Successful applicants will have the opportunity to provide input to the selection process for the Climate Resilience Knowledge Manager.

Application process
The closing date for proposals is **16:00 UK time on 25 March 2020**. No proposal received after this deadline will be considered for funding.

All proposals must be made through the [Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system](), only those proposals submitted through the Je-S system will be accepted for processing. Proposals must be costed and approved by the relevant institutional authority at the research organisation before submission.

In order to use the Je-S system, principal investigators, co-investigators and their organisations need to register on the system a minimum of 1 week before the call closing date. Registration of both the principal investigator's organisation and their own details must be completed before the proposal can be formally submitted to the ESRC.

Care and attention must be given to completing the online form correctly. Proposals that are not completed correctly may be rejected by the ESRC office.

The ESRC may require applicants to amend parts of proposals, such as the length of attachments or the inclusion of missing mandatory attachments, as a condition of accepting the proposal for processing.

All applicants are strongly advised to follow the Je-S guidance for this call and consult the ESRC's [Research Funding Guide](), which sets out the rules and regulations governing its funding.

What we will do with your information

UK Research and Innovation understands the importance of protecting personal information and is committed to complying with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR). It is committed to fostering a culture of transparency and accountability by demonstrating compliance with the principles set out in the Regulation.

GDPR sets out the rules for how organisations must process personal data and sensitive personal data about living individuals. It gives individuals the right to find out what personal data is held about them by organisations and to request to see, correct or erase personal data held.

UK Research and Innovation needs to collect and process personal data about the people (including employees and individuals) it interacts with to carry out its business effectively. UK Research and Innovation is committed to ensuring that employees are appropriately trained and supported to achieve compliance with GDPR. Click [here]() to read UKRI's full GDPR Policy.

Please be aware that by submission of a proposal, the applicants and organisations involved will be giving consent to the sharing of data between the funders involved in this activity – this is the Research Councils that are part of UKRI and DfID.

Commissioning timetable

January-March 2020	Call open for Network Development Scoping grants
March-May 2020	Call open for Knowledge Manager position
June 2020	Commissioning panel for Network Development Scoping grants
July 2020	Interview panel for Knowledge Manager
October 2020	Successful Knowledge Manager and Scoping grants start

June 2021	Call closes for Network Plus applications
September 2021	Commissioning panel for Network Plus applications
January 2022	Successful Network Plus applications start
December 2023	Knowledge Manager role and Network Plus grants end

Contacts

All queries or comments about this call should be addressed to:
climateresilience@esrc.ukri.org

Enquiries relating to technical aspects of the Je-S form should be addressed to:
- Je-S Helpdesk
  Email: jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org
  Telephone: +44 01793 444164

The Helpdesk is staffed Monday–Thursday 08:30–17:00, Friday 08:30–16:30 UK time (excluding public and other holidays).