

## **UKRI-GCRF (Re)Thinking the Off-Grid City: Human infrastructure interactions in the context of urban crises and urban change**

### **Call specification**

Version: April 2019

#### **Summary**

ESRC on behalf of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) are pleased to invite applications focussed on the human-infrastructure interactions of the world's most marginalised urban residents, specifically in the context of the wide variety of crises and changes that they face.

The aim of (Re)Thinking the Off-Grid City is to support the next generation of cutting-edge inter-disciplinary research with a view towards creating practical policy and programming alternatives, engineering solutions and/or social innovations. Conceptually the call also offers the opportunity to re-think and explore the concept of cities, especially in the context of growing urban populations that are not fully on the formal grid.

Funding has been allocated from the [Global Challenges Research Fund \(GCRF\)](#) which is a £1.5 billion funding stream to support cutting-edge research addressing the problems faced by developing countries. GCRF forms part of the UK's [Official Development Assistance](#) commitment, and will be awarded in a manner that fits with Official ODA guidelines.

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.

We aim to fund large-scale interdisciplinary grant proposals. Each grant will be a focal point for human-infrastructure interaction research and enable collaborative partnerships across different stakeholders and disciplines.

Funding is available for proposals from £500,000 to £2 million (100% fEC) and we anticipate awarding grants across that range. Grants will be up to 36 months in duration.

All proposals will have to make a clear case for how they [comply with Official Development Assistance \(ODA\) guidelines](#).

A short [Intention to Submit](#) should be completed by those intending to apply to this call by **30 May 2019**.

Proposals should be submitted via the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S) by the **deadline of 16:00 UK time on 24 July 2019**. Projects should commence between 1 February at the earliest and 1 April 2020 at the latest.

## Background and scope

### Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF)

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a five-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.

GCRF forms part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment, and will be awarded in a manner that fits with the ODA guidelines.

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 Collective Programme is being delivered by UK Research and Innovation and steered by the [GCRF Challenge Leaders](#). For administrative purposes individual calls will be either be hosted by a UKRI Council or UKRI International Development Shared Capability.

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 host function. All received proposals will be shared with other constituent parts of UKRI as necessary to assist with processing.

The (Re)Thinking the Off-Grid City call will be managed by ESRC on behalf of UKRI and wider partnerships of funders with an interest in this area of urban research. These wider partnerships include AHRC, EPSRC, NERC and British Academy. [See further information about the ESRC's approach to GCRF](#) and details of other current GCRF calls.

## Call Details

The human population is growing, and increasingly people are living in towns and cities. It is anticipated that by 2050 68% of the world's population (c.6.8 billion people) will live in urban areas. Already close to 1 billion people globally live in informal urban settlements. Within these contexts some of the most marginalised or least resourced people are not

appropriately connected to formal services and have to manage without, or are dependent on, inadequate and unsafe informal provision. This lack of access is not accidental, but can be understood as the result of political decision-making processes that have led to widely differentiated outcomes across urban populations. In the context of the 'off-grid city', the technical, social, political and environmental are inextricably connected.

This call focuses on human-infrastructure interactions for the most marginalised and disadvantaged populations who face a combination of latent stresses and acute shocks, in a context where urban population and spatial growth has outpaced public provision. The most marginalised and excluded urban residents are also especially vulnerable to wider contextual challenges, e.g. climate change, population growth, political suppression, crime, sexual and gender-based violence etc. As population density increases, compounding problems, such as those associated with insecure land rights and tenancy (inc. multiple occupancy), negatively impact the most disadvantaged urban residents.

There are many forms of conceptualising the 'grid'. The '(Re)Thinking the Off-Grid City' call focuses on five such grids: water, sanitation, energy, transport and communications. Applicants to the fund could address one or more of these grids (including their interactions). The fund is intended to improve outcomes for those people who are not fully on-grid. The call recognises that in reality there is often not a binary 'on-grid/'off-grid' distinction, but rather a continuum with a variety of complex and nuanced local arrangements, comprising different physical, social, technical and political solutions. Even formal grid provision can include public, private and hybrid arrangements.

The (Re)Thinking the Off-Grid City call aims to support innovation through the development of new approaches, or through scaling and disseminating tested approaches to new locations and contexts. Research funded by this call is intended to lead to the generation of new approaches, practical policies, and innovations in governance, design and technology. Applicants will need to be able to explain how they will address barriers to implementation, and how their research will support the creation of improved social outcomes at scale. Innovation in this context can relate to new technologies and use of data in decision-making, but also innovations in governance, dissemination and implementation. The emphasis of this research call is on improving access to essential services for the most marginalised urban residents; there is no assumption that the solution is always to get them 'on-grid.'

The call recognises that innovations take place in a specific social, political, economic and environmental context. Proposals need to recognise and understand the context in which they are seeking to create outcomes. Therefore it is anticipated that applications to the fund will be locally-grounded, challenge-led and interdisciplinary.

The fund is intended to support the robust research that leads to tangible outcomes for those people who are most marginalised. We recognise that populations and communities are rarely homogenous, and therefore it is important that applicants demonstrate how they will ensure that the most vulnerable people are not excluded. Applicants will need to ensure that proposed interventions are equitable, accessible, affordable and appropriate.

Potential research themes for this call could include:

- understanding how increasing 'off-grid' communities' access to water, sanitation, energy, mobility and communications services could improve outcomes.

- understanding the ‘Off-Grid City’ from a systems perspective, e.g. understanding human infrastructure interactions as mediated through:
  - hazards facing cities as a result of shocks, stresses or disruptions (e.g. related to violence, conflict, disasters and environmental degradation);
  - shocks and stresses related to failures of physical infrastructure (e.g. in water/energy supply; drainage, etc.);
  - issues relating to urban expansion, changes in land use patterns including the institutional processes that produce and sustain urban infrastructure
- exploring how different models of social innovation can be used to scale and implement effective solutions;
- developing new and improved ways to identify and gather data (including local data) relating to off-grid communities, leading directly to an improved understanding of need and the enhanced impact of existing interventions;
- improving accountability and voice in urban populations – actions to ensure marginalised communities are able to communicate directly with policy makers, planners and service providers, leading to improved access to infrastructure and services.

Whilst the call does not seek to identify specific target groups, it is clear that some individuals and groups are especially vulnerable to exclusion from essential services. An awareness of gender and intersectionality and the experience of exclusion is important to this call, the wider GCRF portfolio, and international development as a whole. Context also matters, with specific individuals and groups experiencing exclusion and marginalisation in different ways depending on the geographic, political, social and economic circumstances in which they live. Applications to this call will need to identify who the proposed research will benefit, and provide a clear justification for why they have chosen to focus on those specific individuals and/or groups. They will show a deep understanding of the specific needs and circumstance of their intended beneficiaries, and articulate how and why their proposed research will make a difference to people’s lives.

Proposals should have more than one country of focus. The primary country(s) of focus need to be on the DAC list (see below). Non-DAC list countries can be included where it is clear their involvement will help bring benefits to DAC list countries that are of primary focus.

### **Partnerships and collaboration**

Partnerships with academics in the global South and non-academics potentially from civil society and/or the commercial sector are essential to developing robust and applicable research. Applicants are welcome to propose new research partnerships, and/or build on and strengthen existing research partnerships. Specifically, there is an opportunity to develop research capacity in new geographic areas, [especially those that might have been largely overlooked to date by funds such as GCRF](#). The call recognises the wide range of agents involved in providing access to essential infrastructure, and we anticipate that applications will include partnerships that span the formal/informal divide.

Objectives of a collaborative grant are to:

- address the aims of the initiative with interdisciplinary collaborations creating critical mass and expertise

- be a focal point for urban human-infrastructure research in the specific chosen research area, where researchers can collaborate on long-term research projects, and be a platform for the development and enhancement of local partnerships to increase the diversity of voices in the debate.

Collaborative grants will support high-quality innovative research addressing this issue of global importance, and should be conducted by cross-disciplinary teams of researchers. Grants may often need to involve research groups from more than one research organisation and should also involve strategic partnerships with other sectors such as practitioners, policymakers, industry and the public. In addition to carrying out high-quality research, the grants will build research capability and capacity in addressing the challenge by attracting new expertise to the field, either through applying existing research expertise to urban human-infrastructure interactions in international development contexts, or through development of early career researchers.

### **Assessment criteria**

The applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Originality/potential contribution to knowledge**
- **Contribution to promoting welfare and economic development of people in low and middle income countries.** Assessment will consider the quality and coherence of the proposed activities and determine whether they meet the requirements of GCRF, particularly in relation to ODA compliance.
- **Interdisciplinary nature of the proposal:**
  - Is the proposal anchored by a well-integrated interdisciplinary approach which demonstrates both research excellence and the ability to think across, between and within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? The research must add significant value to existing global research efforts.
  - Does the proposal develop novel methodologies for interdisciplinary working, knowledge exchange and innovation, including where appropriate, disciplines that haven't traditionally been oriented towards international development challenges, and are they suitable to the aims and objectives?
  - Does the proposed research have the potential to act as an example of research excellence and innovation in the field, and to define and drive forward the agenda for the role of interdisciplinary research in international development?
- **Design and methods, including data and information management**
  - Are the proposed activities appropriate to the identified impact opportunity? Are the aims of the project realistic/achievable? Is there a clear explanation for the scale, timing and resources that are requested?
  - Does the proposal demonstrate flexibility to adapt over the lifetime of the award and respond with agility to arising opportunities? Does the proposal outline an appropriate framework for monitoring and evaluation, and identify a robust set of outcomes, indicators and measures for success?
- **Value for money**

- Assessment will consider whether the proposed research is good value for money, i.e. the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcome.
  - Are the scale of impacts reasonable for the amount of funding and staff time that is requested (recognising that reasonable costs may vary across different academic disciplines)? Are activity costs reasonable? Is the impact-generating 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 maintaining the project and its outputs beyond the period of the award?
- **Outputs, dissemination and impact**
    - Assessment will consider the clarity and significance of the impact from the proposed activities. Does the proposed award identify realistic pathways with the potential to deliver significant and measurable impacts?
    - Have the applicants taken into consideration the relevant developing country context and demonstrated local interest and capacity to implement solutions? Is there potential for the partnerships, resources, capacity and capability developed throughout the course of the project to 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?
    - 'In the 'Pathways to Impact' attachment, applicants should present initial plans for developing an impact strategy, promoting knowledge exchange, public engagement and effective communication with key stakeholders. We encourage the submission of creative and innovative Pathways to Impact.
- **Research ethics**
    - Have potential ethical issues within the project been appropriately considered (see below for further information)?
- **Capacity-building and international partnerships**
    - Assessment will consider the degree and quality of engagement with appropriate developing country partners (including researchers, practitioners and policymakers) and the role they aim to play in the design and implementation of the proposed approach.
    - The proposal should identify an appropriate range of relevant partners, demonstrating how these partnerships are ethical, equitable and sustainable beyond the initial award. For example, is their engagement meaningful, substantive and clear?
    - The applicant should clearly articulate to what extent the award will develop new or enhanced research capacity for addressing international development challenges in the relevant partner countries (see below for further information).

Applications will undergo peer review before being considered by a specially convened panel of academic and non-academic experts at a meeting in November 2019. The panel will be asked to assess the proposals against the fit to the call (proposals will be directly scored

against the degree to which they address the objectives and scope of the call) and the assessment criteria. The panel will then make formal recommendations to the funders. The funders may wish to apply some conditions on grants, and there may be subsequent negotiations on the details of the support offered. Funding decisions are expected to be announced in December 2019 and awards are expected to commence between 1 February and 1 April 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, and we strongly encourage all proposals to this call to identify research capacity-building activities as part of, and not separate to, the stated research approach. The focus should be on the quality and impact of the research, 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 implementation with developing country partner staff.

Please note that studentships are not eligible under this call. [Further information on capacity-building 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 recognise 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.”

Further guidance on how to develop and maintain equitable research partnerships is available in KFPE's Guide for transboundary research partnerships '[11 Principles and 7 questions](#)'.

## **Funding**

We invite proposals of up to 36 months duration, and between £500,000 and £2 million maximum (100% fEC). This large upper limit is intended to cover the costs of consumables and equipment that are anticipated in some bids e.g. those involving significant natural science or engineering research. For UK-based applicants the Research Councils will pay 80% of the fEC, with the research organisation (RO) contributing the other 20 per cent. Overseas applicants can apply for up to 100% fEC. We expect that the duration of the projects will be determined by the nature of their activities.

### **Eligible activity**

Eligible costs include synthesis of relevant existing work, where appropriate to the projects aims and not already being done elsewhere. Where this is requested, an appropriate sum should be included for communicating outputs of synthesis (alongside other communications costs), and a clear indication in the timeline of when synthesis outputs will be completed. We recommend that grants earmark dedicated funding specifically for delivering the activities outlined in the impact summary. Researchers are encouraged to be innovative in the kinds of user engagement, communications and research uptake activities they plan to undertake. Guidance on developing an impact strategy is available on the ESRC website.

Funded applicants will be expected to network to share knowledge and best practice with each other and other projects funded by the partnership of funders interested in urban human-infrastructure interactions in a development context, and with other similarly focused projects funded through GCRF collective fund calls. Costs can be included for this purpose.

Where proposed research includes the development or evaluation of an intervention, please include information on potential for replicability, acceptability, affordability and scalability. Projects which assess the effectiveness of a particular intervention without placing that assessment within a broader research and policy context will not be funded.

### **Funding of international co-investigators**

GCRF calls will follow standard ESRC policies in that the ESRC will fund 100% of the justified costs for international co-investigators from research organisations of comparable standing with UKRI-recognised UK 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; i.e. 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 and principal investigators must be based at an eligible UK research organisation.

As the scheme is intended to fund work in low- and middle-income countries, high- income country applicants are advised to keep their claimed costs to a minimum and 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. Please note that only DAC list country co-investigators are eligible for 20% of international directly related costs as overheads/indirect costs and that this does not apply to non-DAC list country co-investigators.

Please note that international NGOs are not eligible to be included as co-investigators on proposals

Further information is provided in the call-specific [Je-S guidance](#).

## **ODA compliance statement**

To comply with ODA requirements, all proposals must make clear how their primary purpose is to promote the economic development and welfare of a developing country or countries on the DAC list. 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. In such proposals the primary purpose of the research must be to promote the development and welfare of a developing country not due to graduate from the list.

Applicants must clearly demonstrate how they meet ODA requirements throughout their case for support and pathways to impact submission. In addition, all proposals must include a mandatory attachment addressing the following three 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?

Important considerations:

- To be ODA-compliant the principal motivation of the project must be to directly benefit a country or countries on the DAC list, and the key/principal beneficiaries of the research should be located in a DAC list country or countries.
- It is acceptable for research to take place outside of a DAC list country or for projects to include a comparative element as long as the principal motivation is to benefit a DAC-list country or countries. (It is also fine for research projects to have secondary impacts outside of eligible countries).

- If a focus country within a proposal is flagged on the DAC list as likely to graduate from the list during the course of the project the research will not be ODA-compliant unless the primary focus is on a country or countries not due to graduate.
- 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 international non-governmental organisations they should explain why this is likely to lead to greater impacts than working directly with stakeholders in-country.
- Compliant proposals must address development challenges in an eligible country or countries and be likely to contribute directly to their economic development and/or welfare. Impacts should be targeted at specific DAC-list countries and should not depend on the ‘trickle –own’ of a global public good.

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

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.

### **Gender equality**

Official Development Assistance provided by UKRI, including funding from this call, must comply with the requirements of the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014 which states, the “desirability of providing development assistance that is likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequalities between persons of different gender”.

Applicants must submit a one pager Gender Equality Statement and instructions are provided in the JeS guidance and the Gender Equality Application Guidance.

## Eligibility

**Lead research organisation** – proposals are invited from ROs [eligible for UKRI funding](#) across the UK. 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, additionally for GCRF calls, 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 commitment to the project. Further information regarding eligibility can be found in the ESRC's [Research Funding Guide](#) and [International Co-Investigator Policy](#), although please note that the 30% cap does not apply to this GCRF call. 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 may be requested to complete a UKRI Overseas Due Diligence Questionnaire. Please be aware that research organisations may be contacted by UKRI at any point during the review process. This is in order to expedite our assurance process. If UKRI does contact any non-UK research partner organisation named on an application, the lead organisation will be informed. For 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 if 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. We reserve the right to terminate individual research funding contracts and grants if a breach of safeguarding practice is proven and to review the eligibility of organisations to receive major awards.

## 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.

## Application process

A short '[Intention to Submit](#)' should be completed by those intending to apply to this call by **30 May 2019**.

The closing date for proposals is **16:00 on 24 July 2019**. 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 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.

Je-S is the electronic submission system which is used by all Research Councils to provide a common electronic system that supports research administration. More detailed information is [available](#). In particular, applicants should note the registration requirements to make a Je-S submission. The Je-S application form for this specific call will be open to applicants in due course.

In order to use the Je-S system, principal investigators, co-investigators and their organisations need to register on the system. 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.

Please refer to the call-specific [Je-S guidance](#) for more details on how to apply.

## 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). We are 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. We are committed to ensuring that employees are appropriately trained and supported to achieve compliance with GDPR. For further information please see [UKRI's full GDPR Policy](#).

## Commissioning timetable

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| • Call for proposals opens             | 23 April 2019                            |
| • Closing date for Intention to Submit | 30 May 2019                              |
| • Closing date for proposals           | 24 July 2019                             |
| • Commissioning panel meeting          | November 2019                            |
| • Decisions announced                  | December 2019                            |
| • Grants start                         | 1 February (earliest) – 1 April (latest) |

## Contacts

Queries or comments about this call should be addressed to:

Email: [gcrf-off-gridcities@esrc.ukri.org](mailto:gcrf-off-gridcities@esrc.ukri.org)

- Pete Henly – 01793 413074
- Gemma Johnson - 01793 413116
- Daniel Robinson – 01793 413041

Enquiries relating to technical aspects of the Je-S form should be addressed to:

- Je-S Helpdesk  
Email: [jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org)  
Telephone: +44 (0)1793 444164

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

- [FAQs](#)