

GCRF 'Conflict Intersections' Global Partnership Development Awards: Prevention and Resilience at the Intersections between Conflict, Fragility and Wider Development Challenges and Risks

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Call Update – 12/05/2020

We recognise the challenges the unfolding Covid-19 situation presents for applicants in putting together applications at this time and as such have arranged for a short extension to the submission deadline.

Applicants should endeavour to submit applications with all of the necessary attachments by the revised deadline of **9 June 2020**, but AHRC does recognise the challenges of securing documents such as Project Partner Letters of Support at this time. Where relevant we will put in place a return for amendment process for applications with small outstanding issues or missing documents.

The Assessment Panel will be aware of the potential impact of the current circumstances on the development of proposals and will take this into account when reviewing proposals. Furthermore, as these are partnership development awards, we recognise that not all partnerships will be fully in place at the time of application and that a key element of proposals might be a plan to extend partnerships and collaborations as the award progresses and we move beyond current phases of the pandemic.

Nevertheless, we appreciate that it may not be feasible for some applicants to submit planned applications this summer due to the ongoing global impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, we will explore the feasibility of providing a future funding opportunity for partnership development work in this thematic area following the completion of commissioning of the current call.

Unfortunately, we are not able to provide any firm commitments or further information on the nature or timing of any such further opportunity at this time.

II. Introduction

The aim of this funding call is to support the development of equitable partnerships and an interdisciplinary community to explore the intersections between conflict and fragility (SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and wider development challenges such as health, environmental resilience, sustainable cities and food systems, as well as cross-cutting development issues such as gender, inequalities, poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods.

This call is part of the interdisciplinary Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) Collective Programme being delivered by UK Research and Innovation, managed by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, working in collaboration with other Research Councils within UKRI.

This cross-portfolio call will contribute to the GCRF Security, Protracted Conflict, Refugee Crises and Forced Displacement portfolio and to the other portfolios steered by the GCRF Challenge Leaders (<https://www.ukri.org/research/global-challenges-research-fund/gcrf-challengeleaders/>). It has been designed to complement other cross-portfolio Collective Programme calls such as those on education in conflict and equitable resilience.

Applicants may apply for funding of up to £200,000 (fEC) over a period of between 12 and 24 months in duration. Approximately 20 awards of varying sizes will be supported. Applications are welcome from researchers based in the UK or from organisations based in Low and Middle Income countries (LMIC) on the DAC list of ODA recipients. All applications must include partnership and collaboration between UK and LMIC participants.

AHRC is managing this call on behalf of UKRI and it is intended to support the development of highly collaborative, interdisciplinary, international research partnerships. Applicants from any discipline are encouraged to apply as a part of cross-disciplinary teams.

****UPDATE** This call for applications has been extended and will now close at 1600 hours (GMT) on 9 June 2020**

III. Context

Estimates suggest that by 2030, at least half of the world's poor people will be living in fragile and conflict-affected settings and that the extreme poverty rate is rising primarily in fragile countries. Many of the poorest and most vulnerable people in conflict settings face multiple challenges simultaneously. Development approaches, despite the breaking of silos, are often designed to resolve one problem or create problem driven solutions around specific challenges only. Moreover, in many cases development policies fail to take sufficiently into account the cultural contexts affecting how local populations cope with, and respond to, intersecting challenges. This call aims to address the cross sections between challenges such as conflict, fragility, violence, human rights, access to justice and identity politics and other challenges such as climate and environmental change, gender gaps, forced migration, rapid urbanisation, inequality, public health challenges, access to education and training, heritage at risk, and disasters, amongst others.

The call has been informed by a number of recent reports. The 2018 OECD States of Fragility report emphasises the need for a multi-dimensional approach to the fragility, which is characterised “*as the combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacity of the state, system or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks*”. It also recognises “*the diversity of contexts affected by fragility and dimensions of fragility in each context*”. However, the framework outlined in the report, whilst broad, may not fully capture the complex intersections with cultural and historic factors.

In 2018, the United Nations and the World Bank published a joint report on [Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict](#) which emphasise the need for holistic and inclusive approaches and frameworks to conflict prevention and their integration with wider strategies for sustainable development and the need to address different, intersecting, dimensions of risk.

Recently (February 2020), the World Bank Group published its “Strategy for Fragility, Conflict, and Violence 2020-2025” noting that “*Rising inequality, lack of opportunity, discrimination, and exclusion are fueling grievances and perceptions of injustice. Climate change, demographic change, migration, digital transformation, illicit financial flows, and violent extremism are often interconnected, with effects that transcend borders. These factors can increase vulnerability to shocks and crises and create regional spillovers*”. It notes the need to address the “*drivers of fragility and immediate-to long-term risks—such as climate change, demographic shocks, gender inequality, patterns of discrimination, economic and social exclusion, and perceptions of grievances and injustice—and strengthening the sources of resilience and peace*”. In addition, the framework recognises the importance of local contextual factors and that “*approaches be adapted to the distinct circumstances of FCV [Fragility, Conflict and Violence] settings*”

There are many current high profile challenges which illustrate this intersection of challenges. These include health emergencies such as the on-going Ebola crisis in some conflict-affected regions Africa - where conflict is seriously affecting measures to control the outbreak but also failure to control the outbreak may further exacerbate conflict tensions, including cross-border relations. Other examples include natural disasters, such as the impact of cyclone Idai in exacerbating poverty and fuelling social and cultural tensions and potentially hindering peacebuilding and transitions from conflict. However, many interconnected challenges and contexts of interest to this call are much further from the headlines and/or evolve more slowly over longer time periods. For example, those faced by some women in remote regions in Central Asia living in a high risk earthquake zone affected by cross-border security threats and the emergence of radicalised groups, poor access to services and flood and mudflow risks resulting from melting snow and glaciers exacerbated by climate change.

Consultations led by GCRF Challenge Leaders have also fed into the development of this call. For example, a recent (January 2020) workshop in Central Asia (Bishkek), led by Conflict portfolio Challenge Leader Dr Neelam Raina, bringing together researchers policy-makers and civil society actors, identified a wide range of issues (such as human rights, inclusion, access to natural resources, resilience to climate change and natural disasters, gender equality, land rights, strengthening communities, migration, governance/ power, access to education, justice and other services, cross-border issues, wellbeing, energy) intersecting in varying ways in different contexts with conflict dynamics in the region.

This call builds on recent [GCRF Collective Programme](#) thematic calls, both under the *Security, Protracted Conflict, refugee Crises and Forced Displacement* portfolio (including on *Preventing Conflict, Building Sustainable and Inclusive Peace, Education in Conflict and Crisis, Development-based approaches to Protracted Displacement and Protection in Contexts of Conflict and Displacement*) and under other portfolios (such as (Re)thinking the Off-Grid City, equitable Resilience, Gender and Intersectionality and Health in Context). It seeks to add value to these calls by creating opportunities for partnership development which cut across these themes and portfolios and explore the interconnections between them.

IV. Aims of the Call

A. Scope

This call invites research on groupings of intersecting challenges, which supports community driven, inclusive and innovative approaches to preventative and resilience building measures in developing country contexts affected by both conflict, fragility and violence and in contexts where the power of communities to bring about positive change is limited.

The call is open to applications addressing any LMIC context(s) affected by conflict and fragility and/or in which conflict prevention or peacebuilding is a key development challenge, including those at any stage of the conflict cycle from emerging conflicts, those affected by protracted / fragmented / historic conflicts and those transitioning from conflict. However, we would particularly welcome proposals seeking to address conflict contexts which are less well researched / represented in the current GCRF portfolio and/or conflict contexts characterised by extreme poverty, marginalisation, inequalities and/or vulnerabilities resulting from intersecting causes, drivers or impacts.

The call has a particular focus on addressing the needs of vulnerable and at-risk groups facing multi-dimensional, intersecting and compounding risks and challenges, including those which cross borders and/or are multi-scalar and multi-temporal. It aims to support the development of:

- contextually informed research engaged with local cultures, histories, identities, knowledges and communities;
- equitable partnerships, cross-national collaboration and reciprocal learning; and,
- inter-disciplinary and cross-sectoral research innovation.

Examples of themes relevant to this call include:

- Developing **preventative and resilience building measures** that: reduce risks and vulnerabilities resulting from a range of intersecting cultural, economic, social, environmental and other factors and /or better prepare communities to respond to diverse and/ or multiple risks; address complex drivers and consequences of inequalities, extreme poverty, vulnerabilities for at risk groups; tailor preventative, peace- and resilience- building measures to complex multi-layered local challenges and contexts; and, take a cross-sectoral approach to mobilising local cultural and community assets, human capital and change agents (e.g. youth, women, social movements, cultural groups) to address interconnected drivers and risks.

- Exploring how better understanding of **cascading, amplifying, cumulative and compounding interactions and spill-over effects** between conflict/ fragility and wider societal and environmental risks, can inform the better design and focusing of risk management and impact mitigation strategies. This could include:
 - understanding the inter-connecting, histories, narratives, factors, threat amplifiers and vectors (e.g. inequalities, exclusion, livelihoods, governance, education, health, climate change, infrastructure, displacement, trauma, grievance, heritages, memory and so on) and how these are layered and play out across time and different geographies;
 - the ways that vulnerable groups experience, and respond to, multi-dimensional challenges that occur simultaneously, stacking up the odds against their ability to adapt and respond;
 - identifying intervention opportunities to interrupt cycles of conflict, violence and extremism and or address cascade / compound effects in complex, inter-connected, cultural, social, & environmental systems.
- Research-based, professional and practice-based **learning from the past and across different fields** of prevention, humanitarian, disaster, crisis and emergency response, service delivery and recovery from trauma/ disaster / conflict, including the memories and heritages from past events, indigenous and local skills and knowledges, the ways (and languages) in which knowledge and learning is shared, communicated and represented, and understanding how to better support cross-organisational integrated approaches, to build capacity and to foster collaboration and innovation in service design across sectoral, policy, professional and practice silos.

Cross-cutting themes include:

- tackling gender and other inequalities;
- addressing the risks of conducting collaborative research in contexts of conflict, fragility, violence, crises and other intersecting risks, and in contexts of extreme poverty, inequalities and vulnerabilities;
- inclusive engagement with at-risk, vulnerable or marginalised communities, and/or with specific groups such as young people, ageing populations, etc., to support the co-design of culturally informed responses and as foundations for social innovation, civic engagement and community-driven development;
- building a stronger evidence base including tackling the challenges of evaluating the sustainability and effectiveness of preventative and resilience-building approaches over time in complex interconnected systems;

Examples of research and policy referred to above are intended to be illustrative and not to be prescriptive or a comprehensive indication of research issues which could be included under this call.

In terms of Partnership development, awards will be expected to support:

- Development of equitable partnerships between UK and LMIC researchers and other development and local LMIC partners as appropriate with the aim of catalysing the creation of sustainable, balanced, equitable relationships and partnerships which foster learning and knowledge exchange that is reciprocal with clear mutuality of benefit for all collaborators;
- Cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral creativity and innovation bringing together expertise in:
 - local contexts, knowledges, cultures, identities and histories, including where appropriate those that cross borders, and the contextual factors that have contributed to extreme poverty, inequalities and vulnerabilities;
 - the dynamics of cycles conflict and fragility, including contextual understanding of conflict histories, identities and violence, governance, human rights and access to justice, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and/or transitions from conflict as appropriate; and,
 - inter-connected development challenges such as environmental change, health, urbanisation, food systems, sustainable livelihoods, etc
- innovation and methodological development, drawing across disciplines and fields as appropriate, to support advances in areas such as:
 - approaches for integrated research to understand complex, multiple, intersecting, dynamic challenges, working across borders and boundaries and/or combining diverse expertise knowledges and/or data;
 - working with at risk or vulnerable groups in contexts of conflict, fragility, violence.

All proposals should include discussion of the ways in which planned activities will develop new partnerships or, in the case of already established partnerships, how an award will develop additional new partnerships, new strands of work, new areas of research, etc. Already established partnerships and groups should be clear in their proposal where an award under this call would build upon and advance existing activities.

Partnership awards provide opportunities to explore new research agendas, exchange knowledge insights and ideas, and build networks and partnerships with researchers and non-academic groups in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs) as a foundation for future research innovation. They will also allow researchers to work collaboratively across cultural, linguistic, sectoral and international boundaries and blend scientific, cultural, policy and practice-based research and to build bridges with humanitarian, disaster management and development policy and practice.

Inter-disciplinary boundary-crossing proposals are welcomed, including those proposals that cross Research Council remits. In supporting such boundary crossing research the call seeks to develop the convergence research¹ capabilities needed to address complex and fluid challenges at the

¹ For more information see US National Science Foundation's description of 'convergence research' at: <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/convergence/index.jsp>

intersections between conflict and fragility and wider development challenges and to co-design tailored, innovative, contextually-appropriate, responses which address the underlying drivers of fragility and factors of resilience and meet the needs of vulnerable and at risk groups. It also welcomes radical and new thinking which allows new insights and creative solutions to emerge.

B. Global Challenges Research Fund and Requirements for ODA Compliance

The Global Challenges Research Fund aims to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges 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.

Further information about the Global Challenges Research fund can be found on the [UKRI website](#).

When assessing whether an activity is eligible for GCRF funding under this call, we will consider whether projects satisfy OECD criteria on eligibility. This will be done by assessing whether applications:

- aim to promote the welfare and economic development of a country or countries on the DAC list of ODA recipients
- are designed to address a development need, and
- focus on developing country problems.

Applicants will be required to submit an ODA-compliance statement and a gender equalities statement in line with UKRI requirements for GCRF funding.

It should be noted that activities in developing countries whose main purpose is to promote the culture or values of the UK are not reportable as ODA. This is also the case for activities in countries (including the UK) relating to long-term support for or integration of migrants/ diasporas from developing countries.

Please note, given that a key aim for these awards is to support the long-term sustainable development of equitable partnerships with ODA-eligible countries on the DAC list, proposals focused primarily on upper middle income countries expected to graduate from the DAC list over the next few years are unlikely to be prioritized under this call; this includes: Antigua and Barbuda; Panama; Palau; Argentina and China. Researchers from such countries may be involved in proposals, for example focused on wider learning across LMIC contexts, on the same terms as 'developed country' international co-investigators. Proposals focused on other Upper Middle Income countries will be eligible but should pay particular attention to their impacts on reducing extreme poverty and inequalities in those countries and/or their potential contribution towards addressing cross-border issues and/or to the development of other countries on the DAC list and/or to South-South or global learning.

Exceptions might include where the main intention is to transfer learning for other development contexts in the future or projects seeking to promote South-South learning. International co-investigators and other partners from countries due to graduate from the DAC list may be included in applications but will be expected to be costed in line with AHRC's standard co-investigator policy and not the enhanced funding available to other co-investigators / partners from DAC list countries.

Applications which are not ODA-compliant will not be accepted under this call.

C. Collaborative Nature of Partnership Awards

Partnership awards funded through this call should provide opportunities to explore new cross—disciplinary research agendas, exchange knowledge, insights and ideas, and build networks and partnerships with researchers and non-academic groups in LMICs as a foundation for future research innovation. As part of this they should aim to support learning, stimulate innovation, and create more effective and nuanced decisions in development policy and programme design, implementation, and impact evaluation.

It is expected that successful projects will engage extensively and equitably with research organisations, other organisations, and communities in the partner countries; proposals are normally expected to include relevant international co-investigators and to consider the appropriate balance between UK and LMIC investigators.

UKRI has developed the following statement of expectation for research partnerships in consultation with stakeholders from researching and practising in a developing country context:

“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.”

A UKRI funded project conducted by the Rethinking Research Collaborative has produced a report and series of resources on equitable partnership working which applicants may find helpful:

<https://rethinkingresearchcollaborative.com/2018/10/04/research-reportpromoting-fair-and-equitable-research-partnerships-to-respond-to-globalchallenges/>

Additional resources which applicants may find helpful:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/about-us/programme-policy-practice/resourcesfair-and-equitable-development-research-partnerships>

<https://connected-communities.org/index.php/connected-communitiesfoundation-series/>

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>

V. Eligibility

A. Eligibility Criteria

Unless otherwise stated, the eligibility criteria as published in section 3 of the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) will apply.

Applications may be submitted by researchers based at either:

- UK Higher Education Institutions, or Independent Research Organisations eligible to receive funding from the UK Research Councils. All UK-led applications should have a balanced international leadership team consistent with the principles of equitable international partnership working, and must include a minimum of at least one named international co-investigator based in a research organisation in a low or middle income country.

It is the responsibility of the UK lead organisation to ensure that appropriate and proportionate due diligence and financial assurance processes are in place for international co-investigators and collaborating partners funded under the award.

OR

- LMIC based (ODA DAC list), universities and 'not for profit' research organisations that are confident that they would fully meet UKRI due diligence and financial assurance requirements. LMIC based proposals must include a minimum of at least one named co-investigator based at an eligible UK research organisation.

Lead research organisations which have not already completed UKRI due diligence processes will need to provide information as outlined in the [UKRI International Due Diligence Questionnaire](#) and will need to fully complete UKRI due diligence procedures before any award can be made.

In some cases AHRC / UKRI may seek information or clarification on eligibility at an earlier stage in the processing of applications. AHRC/ UKRI reserves the right not to consider applications which it considers do not, or are highly unlikely to meet, eligibility and/or due diligence requirements.

All grants will be made to the institution hosting the principal investigator, and this institution will be subject to standard terms and conditions for AHRC grants regarding the disbursement of funds to co-investigators at other institutions, and with additional programme-reporting requirements.

B. Early Career Researchers

Applications led by, or with significant involvement of, early career researchers of post-doctoral or equivalent standing, will be welcomed. Where appropriate research organisations submitting applications led by early career researchers are encouraged to support such applications through, for example, appropriate provision of mentoring, advisory, professional development, expert /project management support services, tailored to the career development needs of the early career researcher(s) and to supporting delivery of the proposed partnership development activities.

C. Project Partners

Where appropriate, collaboration with International organisations, NGOs, think tanks, development agencies, humanitarian assistance groups, cultural, heritage and creative sector organisations and other policy, professional and/or practice organisations is encouraged. This can include partners from country/field-based offices if emergent ideas allow them to be knowledge leaders or brokers for solutions that can either be tested or scaled up. Depending on their role within the partnership development award, the partners from outside research organisations can be involved in applications as project partners, funded collaborators, sub-contractors or in advisory roles.

D. Eligible Activities

Eligible activities under Partnership Development Awards include (in variable combinations):

- establishing inter-disciplinary collaborative partnerships, teams or consortia;
- small scale, pilot, proof of principle, exploratory, inter-disciplinary, higher risk projects to explore innovative boundary crossing collaborations;
- developing research strategy and agendas to strengthen research activity and innovation across the field;
- international knowledge sharing across research departments, between Institutions and across sectoral boundaries;
- capacity building including inter-disciplinary skills enhancement and career development;
- widening /extending the disciplinary breadth of existing teams/partnerships (e.g. through placements, embedding, ethnographic research, etc.);
- establishing foundations for research collaboration such as building of research/ stakeholder networks, development of research protocols, collecting 'baseline' data, building trust and understanding shared values, developing collaborative/ inclusive working practices including issues around gender and equalities and language / translation, strengthening processes for safeguarding or risk management, ethical reviews, developing evaluation methods, collaboration and IP agreements, ensuring appropriate local consent, access and permissions etc.
- engagement / consultation / co-design with local communities, groups and / or intended users or beneficiaries;
- scoping potential for shared use of data, collections, fieldwork, facilities or other resources with a defined sustainable research outcome;
- cross-disciplinary (and cross-cultural/language) literature reviews, research synthesis, evidence analysis or integrative data sharing and analysis.

Please note that capital or infrastructure expenditure (e.g. to build, develop or maintain research or other facilities), and funding for PhD studentships, will not be eligible costs for this call.

VI. Guidance on Costs and Project Timescales

Unless otherwise stated, project costs, minimums, maximums and timescales as published in the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) will apply.

The maximum funding that may be sought for a Partnership Development award is £200,000; this limit applies to the total (100%) full economic cost of the project. The duration of a project can be between 12 to 24 months the earliest eligible start date for an award is 1st October 2020.

All UK costs entered should be in line with the standard AHRC guidance available in section 3 of the AHRC Research Funding Guide. Please note for this funding opportunity all costs claimed by UK investigators should be claimed at 80% of the full economic cost (fEC).

This call will support in full 100% of the direct costs of the research incurred by non-UK institutions.

International PIs/Co-Investigators based in LMIC countries can claim 100% of their direct costs. In addition, a contribution towards indirect and estates costs at LMIC organisations is permissible, calculated at up to 20% of the total direct costs charged to the grant relating to the activities of the investigator(s).

All applicants based at LMIC institutions should refer to section [insert number] Further Information on Eligible International Costs before submitting an application.

Grants will be managed per UKRI standard terms and conditions. Funding is not available for PhD or Masters studentships, or for capital investment e.g. in terms of infrastructure or facilities development. All items costed on the application must be fully detailed and justified in the Justification for Resources document and will be included within considerations of the overall value for money of the project.

Further details on eligible international costs can be found in [Annex B](#)

VII. Assessment Process and Criteria

Unless otherwise stated, the assessment process and criteria as stated in Section 5 of the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) will apply.

Applications submitted under this call will follow AHRC assessment processes. Projects will be assessed on the basis of their quality and individual merits, according to the assessment criteria outlined below, with particular focus on the capacity of the proposed research to understand context, draw out operationally-relevant lessons and explore wide ranging implications and influences.

A cross-disciplinary panel will be co-constituted by AHRC in consultation with UKRI. This will draw on members of AHRC, other Research Council and UKRI ODA Peer Review Colleges, together with other UK and international academic and non-academic expertise as appropriate. The relevant UKRI GCRF Challenge Leader(s) will also advise the panel on fit to the call and wider GCRF portfolios.

A full list of the assessment criteria used for this call can be found in [Annex A](#).

The panel will be convened during the week commencing 13 July 2020.

Call timetable

Activity	Date
UPDATED Deadline for submissions	4pm (GMT) 9 June 2020
Panel meeting date	w/c 13 July 2020
Funding decisions to be issued	Late August 2020
Earliest start date of awards	1 October 2020
Latest start date of awards	1 January 2021

VIII. Scheme Requirements and Post Award Reporting

Award holders will be required to submit outputs, outcomes and impacts that arise from AHRC's funding through the Researchfish system. Information can be added to Researchfish at any point once the award has started but award holders will also be required to 'submit' this information to AHRC at one 'Submission Period' each year. Award holders will receive an email with log-in details shortly after their award has started. More details on Researchfish are available on the UKRI website [here](#).

A. ODA Compliance

Successful awards under this call will be supported via ODA funding, as such projects must demonstrate how they are ODA compliant and will contribute to the economic development and welfare of developing countries. Applicants are encouraged to pay close attention to the three guiding questions when completing their proposal:

1. Which country / countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal and are these countries likely to continue to be ODA eligible for the duration of the research?
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?
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.

B. Safeguarding, risks, ethics and research conduct

Funded proposals will be expected to adopt the highest standards of good research conduct, safeguarding and gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

All applications should include a discussion of research ethics. 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. Funded proposals will be expected to adopt the highest standards of good research conduct. More guidance can be found on this on the UKRI website (<https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/research-integrity/>).

All full proposals will include an assessment of risks, including safety of all those involved in the research (researchers, partners and participants) and strategies for addressing risks relating to potential changes to research access and/or conflict dynamics.

Proposals funded under this call will be expected to have in place appropriate provisions for safeguarding in line with the expectations outlined in the UKCDR statement on safeguarding (<https://www.ukcdr.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2018/10/UKCDR-Safeguarding-Statement-1.pdf>). 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. Applicants should ensure that they are aware of the procedures that are in place for identifying and managing safeguarding risks and for reporting and investigation of allegations when they arise.

In addition, where appropriate proposals should consider how they might contribute to developing and sharing best practices and building capabilities for the future in the above areas.

C. Reporting Requirements

Award holders will be required to submit outputs, outcomes and impacts that arise from UKRI's funding through the ResearchFish system. Information can be added to ResearchFish at any point once the award has started but award holders will also be required to 'submit' this information to UKRI at one 'Submission Period' each year. Award holders will receive an email with log-in details shortly after their award has started. More details on ResearchFish are available on the UKRI website here: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/research-outcomes/>

Applicants should note that award holders funded under this call will form part of the wider UKRI GCRF Collective Programme, led by the UKRI GCRF Challenge Leaders. Therefore, additional reporting requirements might also apply. Successful applicants will be expected, as a condition of funding, to participate in further cross-disciplinary and collaborative partnership events, workshops, reports, knowledge exchange and synthesis activities organized as a part of this programme and to collaborate with the GCRF Challenge Leaders.

Award holders under this call will all form a part of the “Security, Protracted Conflict, Refugee Crises and Forced Displacement” portfolio but are also likely to be relevant to at least one other GCRF portfolio. Consequently there may be increased opportunities to contribute to activities under a number of different portfolios, in addition to those under the “Security, Protracted Conflict, Refugee Crises and Forced Displacement” portfolio.

D. Gender and Equalities

To comply with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, applications must provide a Gender Equality Statement, outlining how applicants have taken meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities. This must be no longer than a one page and is a mandatory attachment.

Applicants are required to address the below criteria, with an understanding that, depending on the nature of their research and innovation, not all questions will be applicable.

Criteria to address while considering gender impact:

1. Have measures been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different genders to be involved throughout the project? This includes the development of the project, the participants of the research and innovation, and the beneficiaries of the research and innovation.
2. The expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond.
3. The impact on the relations between people of different genders and people of the same gender. For example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power, etc. – How will any risks and unintended negative consequences on gender equality be avoided or mitigated against, and monitored?
4. Are there any relevant outcomes and outputs being measured, with data disaggregated by age and gender (where disclosed)?

Further guidance for applicants on Gender Equality Statements is available [here](#).

Applicants for ODA funding administered by the AHRC (including this call) are encouraged, where appropriate, to **extend the statement to cover intersecting and wider issues relating to equalities, diversity, identities and inclusion, and the UN Sustainable Development “no-one left behind” agenda as well as to discuss any context-specific factors which need to be taken into account in addressing issues of gender and (in)equalities and /or working with vulnerable or at risk communities**. Applicants addressing these intersecting and wider issues of inequalities may extend the statement to up to **two pages** where required.

E. Due Diligence Process

As part of UKRI funding assurance, non-UK research organisations may be requested to complete an 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. Non-UK lead organisations will need to undergo UKRI due diligence checks if they have not been checked by UKRI in the last three years. Those organisations checked in the last three years may still have to undergo additional checks if UKRI decides they are needed. The lead research organisation would then be responsible to conducting due diligence checks on other non-UK partner research organisations. However, UKRI reserves the right to request information on these due diligence processes and to conduct further due diligence checks.

For organisations hosting 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.

For proposals led by UK research organisations, the lead research organisation should conduct due diligence checks on non-UK partner organisations funded under the grant, using a risk-based approach. The level of due diligence should be commensurate with the levels of funding and risk involved and should consider potential risk mitigation options for research conducted in fragile research contexts.

AHRC reserves the right to request clarification of organisations capability to address due diligence processes before accepting applications for processing and not to accept applications led by organisations judged not to have a realistic chance of meeting UKRI full due diligence requirements.

Please see the UKRI due diligence guidance, including the International Questionnaire for further information.

The Due Diligence process can take some time. When setting proposed start dates, applicants in host organisations not recognized to hold UKRI grants should allow a minimum of two months beyond the earliest grant start date for the Due Diligence process to be completed.

IX. Contact Information

For queries about this call such as eligible activities and costs or remit of the call please contact AHRC at enquiries@ahrc.ukri.org or telephone: 01793 416060 (available Monday to Friday 8:30-16:30)

For queries on using Je-S such as creating and submitting the application form or Je-S account creation, please contact the Je-S Helpdesk on 01793 444164 or jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org (available Monday to Friday 08:30 – 5:00).

X. Annex A - Assessment Criteria

All proposals will be assessed against the extent to which the proposal meets the specific aims of the call, including fit to the overall objectives of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) and potential to add significant value to the current GCRF Security, Protracted Conflict, Refugee Crises

and Forced Displacement portfolio and to other challenge portfolios as appropriate and to contribute to the wider GCRF Collective Programme.

In addition, the following will be taken into account when assessing proposals under this call:

Quality, interdisciplinarity and innovation

- Does the proposal address a novel, innovative and timely research agenda or issue and offer the potential to critically reflect upon, develop and drive forward research agendas and to develop new insights and areas of enquiry?
- Does the proposal make a strong case for the significance and importance of the objectives of the partnership and research issues to be explored, provide a solid grounding of the research agenda in the current research literature and evidence base and outline a robust design and methods and appropriate intended outcomes?
- Would the research programme support the development of genuinely interdisciplinary research approaches that would be well integrated and would support mutual exchanges between expertise, literatures, and approaches from different disciplines?

Fit with the call specification

- Does the proposal demonstrate a strong and central alignment to the research agenda outlined for the call and fully meet all required partnership characteristics?
- Would the research add significant value to, or be innovative in the context of, the current GCRF Security, Protracted Conflict, Refugee Crises and Forced Displacement portfolio and other portfolios as appropriate?
- Is there evidence that the research would be grounded in understanding of the LMIC cultural contexts in which it will be conducted and in which it is hoped the research will have impact?

Likelihood of Development Impact

- Does the proposal identify an appropriate range of potential users and beneficiaries in LMICs and/or organisations that support international development and demonstrates an appropriate strategy for collaboratively exploring impact with relevant LMIC/development partners?
- Have the applicants taken into consideration the relevant in-country context, languages and cultures and demonstrated local appetite and capacity to implement solutions?
- Have the applicants given adequate consideration to issues of gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion in their pathways to impact?
- Does the proposed partnership proposal offer a sustainable legacy beyond the end of the award and through uptake of the research e.g. through continued partnership working or through the resources, capacity and capability developed?

Equitable partnership

- Does the proposal identify an appropriate range of relevant partners, and would these partnerships be authentic, ethical, equitable and sustainable beyond the initial award?

- Is there evidence that the proposal has been jointly developed in a genuinely collaborative way between researchers based in the UK, researchers based in DAC-list countries, and, where appropriate, other relevant partners such as charities and NGOs?
- Would the partnership benefit all those involved and /or leave them stronger at the end, for example by supporting the development of research capabilities or the research career development of applicants or other individuals working, both in the UK and in LMICs?
- Would the proposed partnership be collaboratively led, as appropriate, by researchers based in the UK, researchers based in DAC-list countries, and, where appropriate, other relevant partners such as charities and NGOs?
- Is the distribution of leadership, roles, responsibilities and resources/ funding between UK and LMIC researchers and non-academic partners appropriate and equitable?

Capability and interdisciplinarity of the research team

- Does the proposed team have the appropriate track record, knowledge and expertise across disciplines as well as appropriate understanding of local contexts and knowledges?
- Do the named investigators demonstrate the requisite skills to manage the proposed activities and to support inter-disciplinary and cross-cultural working? Are arrangements in place to ensure that inputs from across the intended partnerships will be well integrated? Is there evidence that practical issues such as working inclusively across different languages, laws and cultures have been considered?
- Does the proposal identify an appropriate set of collaborations/partners for the proposed activities particularly in respect to the requirement for inclusion of appropriate collaborators with LMICs and/or organisations that support international development?
- Are there effective plans for management of the activities and the monitoring of progress, including provision of a realistic timetable and feasible resourcing plan for achieving the aims and objectives of the proposal and plans for managing any data produced or addressing any technical requirements?
- Is there evidence of sufficient support from the research institutions involved to support management of the project, including due diligence, safeguarding, risk management and related issues?

Ethics, equalities, safeguarding and risk

- Are the proposed partnerships and working relationships ethical and equitable?
- Have the applicants identified the ethical implications arising from the proposed research and provided sufficient detail of how these will be addressed?
- Does the proposal provide an adequate analysis of key risks and assurance on how these risks will be assessed and managed over the lifetime of the award and how the burdens relating to these risks are shared / managed effectively and equitably across the partnership?
- Have the applicants provided a framework which provides satisfactory assurance that gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion and safeguarding issues as well as risks to all participants in the research will be assessed and managed effectively?
- Does the proposal include meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities, and is there evidence of a genuine effort to

incorporate consideration of gender dynamics and wider inclusion considerations within the design of the research?

Value for money

- Are the requested costs appropriate and justified? Is the scale of intended impacts reasonable for the amount of funding requested and staff time included?
- Does the proposal overall represent good value for money? i.e. the optimal and equitable use of resources to achieve the intended research and international development outcomes.
- Are there appropriate processes, controls and risk management measures in place to ensure due diligence and financial assurance?

Panel members will be asked to identify both the strengths and weaknesses against each of the points within each proposal that they have been asked to assess. It is on the balance of these strengths and weaknesses that an overall judgement should be made.

XI. Annex B - Further Information on Eligible International Costs

AHRC's standard international co-investigator and international funding policy applies but with some additional provisions for LMIC-led proposals and/or the costs of equitable partnership work

undertaken at an overseas organisation in Low or Middle Income Countries (as summarised in the table below).

However, please note that international co-investigators and other partners from countries due to graduate from the DAC list (this includes: Antigua and Barbuda; Panama; Palau; Argentina and China) may be included in applications but will be expected to be costed in line with AHRC’s standard co-investigator policy and not the enhanced funding available to other co-investigators / partners from DAC list countries.

Description	Research Councils Contribution (percent)
Costs incurred for overseas Investigators or Co-Investigators and any locally employed staff, e.g. percent of actual salary based on time worked on the grant (entered in the Other directly Incurred section and ticked as exceptions on Je-S form).	100
Costs incurred by the overseas organisation and associated with the research, e.g. consumables, field work, translation costs, supporting inclusive participation, etc. (entered in the Other directly Incurred section and ticked as exceptions on Je-S form)..	100
Costs incurred by overseas investigators or staff for travel and expenses (entered in the Other directly Incurred section and ticked as exceptions on Je-S form).	100
A contribution towards indirect and estates costs at overseas organisations in LMIC/developing countries is permissible, calculated at up to 20% of the total direct costs charged to the grant relating to the activities of the LMIC investigator(s), (entered as exceptions on the Je-S form).	100

Applicants should seek contributions from project partners, e.g. business, government and third sector organisations, where appropriate. In acknowledgment of the fact that 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 (no more than 1 FTE per annum), travel and subsistence, other direct costs and overheads. Costs will be funded at 100 percent fEC and should be entered as Other Directly Incurred Exceptions on the Je-S form. Total costs associated with third sector bodies’ contribution should not normally exceed 30 percent of the overall cost of the grant at 100 percent fEC, however exceptional cases may be considered where the research impact activities require additional work by partners which fall outside their normal activities – a full case for any exceptions should be made in the Justification for Resources.

Key variations to the standard AHRC policy on international co-investigator policy for this GCRF call are:

- i) there is no 30% limit on total overseas investigator and co-investigator costs for individuals based in developing countries (on the DAC list, except those about to graduate from the list as detailed above), although a 30% limit applies to costs associated with overseas co-investigators who are not based in developing countries on the DAC list;
- ii) in addition to the costs for overseas academic investigators, costs for third sector/NGO partners may also be funded at 100% fEC, normally subject to 30% overall limit of the total cost of an award at 100% fEC; where the 30% limit is exceeded a full justification in terms of the intellectual and practical contribution to the research of the third sector partner should be provided. In addition, staff salaries at third sector/NGO organisations are not expected to exceed 1 FTE per annum.
- iii) A contribution towards indirect and estates costs can be made for overseas organisations within DAC list (LMIC) countries, calculated at up to 20% of the total eligible direct costs charged to the grant directly relating to the activities of the LMIC investigator/ co-investigator; however, in line with the standard AHRC co-investigator policy, estates/indirect/overhead costs cannot be requested for international co-investigators employed by academic organisations which are not based in a DAC list country (i.e. research organisations located in developed countries and their subsidiaries). LMIC indirect and estates costs must be included within the overall £200,000 limit (at 100% fEC) for applications under this call. Please note that as indirect costs can be claimed for overseas co-investigators it is not possible to request direct costs to cover basic office and facilities (e.g. library access etc.) and minor/day-to-day consumables (e.g. photocopying, telephone calls, etc.) although major additional research related costs (e.g. linked to specific research methods such as survey/fieldwork costs or development of project-specific digital resources) may be requested as direct costs where appropriate.

Where projects administered by UK Research Organisations involve international co-investigators or the sub-contracting of significant elements of the funding or research delivery to international partners, it will be a condition of funding that the UK Research Organisation undertakes appropriate due diligence and financial assurance, taking into account the developmental stage of partnerships and proportionate to the levels of funding involved. A further condition will be that they ensure that the partner organisations have in place contextually appropriate procedures for addressing issues of gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion, research integrity, safeguarding, data protection, fraud prevention and compliance with the other standard terms and conditions of UKRI grants.

Where awards are led by LMIC research organisations, it will be a condition of funding that the LMIC Research Organisation undertakes appropriate due diligence and financial assurance for any funding for LMIC partner research organisations and/or subcontracted elements to other LMIC/ international organisations, taking into account the developmental stage of partnerships and proportionate to the levels of funding involved. However, where funding is being awarded to a UK co-investigator and a UK Higher education institution or independent research Organisation eligible for UKRI funding, the LMIC research organisation will not be required to conduct due diligence on an eligible UK research organisation. We would normally expect funding for UK co-investigators on LMIC-led awards to be funded at an 80% full economic cost basis. Exceptionally we may consider requests from teams

recommended for funding to split funding for a single project between two awards to LMIC and UK institutions (provided that the sum of both awards falls within the £200,000 limit) - however at this point only a single applications should be submitted through Jes for the full combined cost of the activities.

All applications (including those led by LMIC organisations) should be costed in pounds sterling using the most recent exchange available at the time of costing or forward buying rate where used by a research organisation. Unspecified contingency costs and exchange rate contingency costs are not permitted.

Capital or infrastructure expenditure (e.g. basic office/laboratory/accommodation furniture or equipment, building/site construction, maintenance or refurbishment work, etc.) is not an eligible cost under this call although additional costs incurred by existing facilities or infrastructures relating to their use as a part of the research or in the archiving of project-specific research data/outputs may be considered. Costs for equipment purchase under £10,000 will only be considered on an exceptional basis where significant use of equipment is required primarily or solely for the proposed networking activity and/or where this is more cost effective than other options such as hiring equipment.

Given the ODA focus of this call on LMIC countries, costs for overseas co-investigators in high income countries should be kept to a minimum and fully justified in terms of the unique capabilities which they will bring to the research which are not available within the UK or LMIC partner countries.

The balance of intellectual, impact and engagement, leadership and costs between high income countries and LMICs will be considered in the assessment of proposals, recognising that this may vary according to the specific nature, focus and context of research networks. Please ensure budget breakdowns between high income and LMIC researchers and partners are justified and appropriate in respect to the equitable partnership aims of this ODA funding scheme.

Costs may be included to support inclusive participation in research activities, for example in terms of translation costs or support for carers. These may be incurred by either the UK or LMIC partners as appropriate. Where possible accessible venues and facilities should be selected; please note that infrastructure costs cannot be requested for example to make structural alterations to venues for improved accessibility.