

## **AHRC Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement Scheme: 2020 GCRF Highlight Notice for International Development**

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### **II. Introduction**

The aim of this highlight notice in AHRC’s Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement Scheme (FoF) is to encourage applications exploring innovative ways to enhance engagement with, and impacts from, research funded by the AHRC and arts and humanities research funded through the UKRI’s wider cross-disciplinary Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) and Newton Fund.

Proposals will be expected to involve equitable partnerships with Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICS) (i.e. countries on the DAC list of ODA recipients for 2018-20) and/or with development organisations and to explore unanticipated or emergent potential development impact directly related to current or past AHRC/UKRI GCRF or Newton-funded arts and humanities research. Applications should pay careful attention to issues of gender, equalities, diversity and impact in international development and we welcome proposals seeking to innovative in terms inclusive engagement and environmental sustainable ways of working.

The ‘UKRI GCRF/Newton Fund Agile response call to address COVID-19’, which closed at the end of July 2020, has provided a separate recent opportunity for repurposing current grants or applying for

new funds specifically designed to respond urgently to the impacts of / recovery from the coronavirus pandemic in developing countries. **Therefore we will not consider applications under this highlight notice which are specifically designed to respond urgently to the impacts of COVID-19 and which could have been submitted under the scope of the UKRI GCRF/ Newton Fund Agile response call.** However, we recognise that applications to this highlight notice may need to reflect or adapt to the changed development environment created by the pandemic and/or to respond development challenges or needs which have been amplified by the pandemic and/ or to address the intersections between the pandemic and longer term development challenges such as sustainable livelihoods, inequalities and vulnerabilities and/or conflict and fragility. Applications which respond to the changed environment created by the pandemic in this way will be welcomed under this highlight notice. Similarly, proposals may wish to build upon changes to ways of working and engaging that have been stimulated by the pandemic and/or seek to feed into policy and practice agendas that have been reframed by the pandemic or to utilise emerging new routes to impact and change.

Funding of up to £150,000 (fEC) is available over periods of up to 18 months in duration starting from 1 February 2021.

**This highlight notice will close at 1600 hours on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020.**

### **III. Context**

Applications can be submitted under this highlight notice for knowledge exchange, public engagement/participation (in LMICs), public policy, development impact, non-academic dissemination, innovation, practice-based and commercialisation activities that arise unforeseeably during the lifespan of, or following, AHRC-(or UKRI-) funded arts and humanities research and which have the potential to contribute towards international development and the welfare of people in LMICs.

**In order to be considered under this highlight notice applications must draw significantly on relevant arts and humanities research literature, context and concepts or approaches and include significant research expertise within the remit of the AHRC.** Inter-disciplinary boundary-crossing proposals are welcomed, including those proposals that cross Research Council remits. Where proposals extend beyond the AHRC's subject remit, they should ensure that they bring arts and humanities research expertise, and draw on distinctive arts and humanities research concepts, ideas and/or approaches centrally in the development of the proposed Follow on Funding activities.

Arts and Humanities researchers interested in follow-up applications building on research funded under the Newton Fund may apply under this highlight notice. However, applicants who have submitted a proposal under the 2020 Newton Fund Impact Scheme (covering Egypt, Indonesia, Thailand and Peru) which closed in June 2020 should not submit the same or a substantially similar application under this highlight notice.

We encourage applications under this highlight notice that seek to extend equitable partnerships with researchers in LMICs but the prime focus of proposals should be towards non-academic partnerships, audiences and user communities in LMICs.

Proposals primarily focused around academic dissemination (e.g. academic conferences or events or translation of academic outputs), teaching/training in higher education, academic exchanges, research resources/facilities or similar activities), are not eligible under this highlight notice. This remains the case, even if these are focused on engagement with academic communities in ODA-recipient countries.

However, proposals focused around supporting knowledge exchange with cultural, creative and heritage organisations (such as museums, galleries, libraries, archives, performance groups etc.) would be eligible under the highlight notice. Additionally, proposals focused on wider non-academic groups in the public, private and voluntary sectors in ODA-recipient countries, on education and learning impacts in LMICs or international development organisations/non-academic organisations with a significant international engagement remit, would also be eligible under the highlight notice.

We recognise that with the evolution of equitable partnership working, development of LMIC capabilities and the desire to strengthen the use of local knowledge and expertise and support the long term embedding and local sustainability of impact activities, *in some cases* it may be more appropriate for Follow-on Fund activities to be led by LMIC research organisations. Therefore, this highlight notice is open to applications led by eligible (see guidance on LMIC organisational eligibility below) LMIC partners/ research organisations who were involved in the original AHRC-(co)funded grant where this has the support of the original AHRC grant principal investigator and would be undertaken in partnership with one or more UK co-investigators from the original UK research team. Nevertheless, we recognise that not all partnerships will be at the same stage of development and that some cases it may be more efficient for a UK research organisation to lead on grant administration and for LMIC partners to take on other roles as a part of the equitable partnership working.

In line with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledge to 'leave no-one behind' and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5. Gender Equality and 10. Reduced Inequalities, AHRC has identified equalities, diversity and inclusion as a key cross-cutting theme for future development of its GCRF portfolio. UN SDG 10 for example includes targets to "empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status" and "Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard". Applications under this highlight notice are therefore asked to give particular attention to issues of gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion and to consider whether any specific steps should be included to ensure that engagement and the distribution of the benefits from development impact activities are distributed as inclusively as possible, or indeed the potential need to target activities towards groups at risk of exclusion or affected by marginalisation or extreme poverty. Where appropriate costs may be included within applications linked to supporting inclusive participation in activities and /or to tracking the extent to which activities are reaching communities at risk of exclusion.

Please note that in line with the overall remit of the Follow-on-Funding Scheme the highlight notice will only fund proposals seeking to enhance the value and wider benefit of the original funded research project and is not intended to support new research projects or provide supplementary funding for the continuation of research projects. However, proposals may include an element of research and/or data collection to understand, track, evidence or capture the value or impact generated from the proposed development impact activities for LMIC communities, including issues around the sustainability and/or distribution of benefits (including in terms of gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion) within and/or between LMICs and/or to further inform the development of theories of change emerging from the research.

In June 2020 UKRI launched its [environmental sustainability strategy](#) which seeks to embed environmental sustainability across the research sector and work towards net zero futures. Accordingly, we would encourage all applicants to this call to actively consider managing the environmental footprint of the proposed activities and would welcome proposals which seek to experiment or innovate more environmentally sustainable, as well as inclusive, approaches to enhancing research impact.

Please note that from 2020/21, including this highlight notice, the UK's partnerships with China and India under the Global Challenges Research Fund and the Newton Fund will have a renewed focus on delivering global development impact. The UK will continue to work in close partnership with these countries on cutting-edge research, with the primary objective of delivering benefit to developing countries around the world, as well as secondary benefits in the UK, China and India.

## **IV. Aims of the Call**

### **A. Scope**

This highlight notice seeks to encourage innovative proposals for enhancing inclusive engagement with, and impacts from, research funded by the AHRC in one or more countries which receive Official Development Assistance (ODA) and/or which will contribute more broadly to international development. This highlight notice forms a part of AHRC's wider activities under the [Global Challenges Research Fund \(GCRF\)](#)

This is the fourth highlight notice in the Follow-on Funding scheme for international development following earlier highlight notices in 2016, 2018, and 2019. This further highlight notice recognises both the continued growth of the AHRC ODA portfolio, which includes over 300 projects, and of the contribution of arts and humanities research to international development research across UKRI more widely (some funded with/ led by other Research Councils), and the potential for new impact opportunities to emerge over time and across different stages of the lifecycle of awards. Further details of the AHRC and wider UKRI GCRF and Newton Fund portfolios can be found on the [UKRI's webpages](#) and through [Gateway to Research](#).

The focus of this highlight notice is on supporting new project-specific development impact activities which build on past AHRC funded research or arts and humanities research funded as a part of the wider UKRI GCRF and Newton Fund portfolios. Applications may be submitted which follow-up AHRC

funded research projects, past or present, including research projects funded under delegated funding e.g. through AHRC GCRF Network Plus awards. They may also follow-up cross-Council GCRF/ Newton Fund research involving the AHRC as a partner, including joint calls led by other Research Councils with co-funding from the AHRC (for example calls on Building Resilience, Forced Displacement, Global Public Health, Indigenous Communities, etc. ). It also includes research funded as a part of cross-UKRI GCRF calls such as the UKRI GCRF hubs or GROW awards which involve a significant research contribution from the arts and humanities. In all cases, to be considered under this highlight notice the follow-up proposal should be led by, or have significant core input from, arts and humanities researchers and should involve substantial content of relevance to the AHRC's remit.

Previous applicants or award holders under the Follow-on Fund are welcome to apply as there is no limit on the number of different applications which can be submitted or held which relate to the same original project,

As with other applications to the Follow-on Funding scheme, we particularly wish to encourage innovative and creative approaches to developing impact from past or current AHRC GCRF/ Newton Fund/ ODA funded research. We anticipate that projects will contribute to international development policy or practice and/or develop impact activities / theories of change with the potential to deliver significant economic, social, cultural and/or policy impacts, and contribute to development (and welfare more broadly) in ODA recipient countries.

We expect projects to involve equitable partnerships between UK researchers and LMIC researchers/partners and other development partners and in some cases can consider applications through this highlight notice led by LMIC-based partner research organisations. Applicants are asked to give careful consideration to issues of ethics, duty of care, gender, equalities, diversity and inclusion in terms of proposed development impact activities. Where possible we expect proposals to capture, and critically reflect upon, evidence of impact and the distribution of benefits.

## **B. Additional Requirements**

In addition to meeting the normal requirements and remit for applications to the Follow-on Funding Scheme, in order to be considered under this highlight notice applications **must also demonstrate all of the following characteristics:**

- I. A focus on enhancing impact emerging from past or current AHRC funded research under the GCRF/ Newton Fund or other AHRC grants where the main focus is on delivering significant economic, social, cultural, welfare or policy impacts and/or supporting research-led innovation in one or more of the countries which appear on the [DAC \(Development Assistance Committee of the OECD\) list of ODA Recipients \(for 2018-2020\)](#). These can be countries under any category in the ODA list (LMICs) which have the potential to contribute to international development policy or practice (including, for example, the [UN Sustainable](#)

[Development Goals](#) in LMIC contexts)<sup>1</sup>. Where possible, we would also encourage proposals focused on other Upper Middle Income countries to pay particular attention to their impacts on reducing extreme poverty and inequalities in those countries and/or their potential contribution towards the development of other countries on the DAC list and/or to South-South or global learning.

- II. Contain a clear explanation of how the proposed activities will produce outcomes of significant value for non-academic beneficiaries/users/communities in ODA recipient countries and/or on policy or practice relating to international development. Where appropriate, reference should be made to: the theories of change/development which frame the proposed development impact activities; who the beneficiaries in LMICs are expected to be; how their perspectives have informed the proposal; and how development impact of the proposed activities will be assessed/evaluated;
- III. Include, as a minimum, collaboration with at least one non-academic organisation which supports international development. For example, this might be an international aid, development or humanitarian relief organisation/charity or organisations supporting international cultural exchange. Alternatively, this might be collaboration with at least one non-academic organisation working or based in an ODA recipient country (e.g. heritage/fair/faith/creative/community group or business, public or voluntary/non-profit/civil society organisation). These could either be 'project collaborators' supported as part of the project to help it to deliver its aims, or 'project partners' who are contributing their own resources (in cash or in kind) in support of the project. Proposals involving overseas (including LMIC-based) co-investigators are encouraged, but overseas academic partnerships would not by themselves meet this requirement for non-academic collaboration.

## V. Eligibility

The eligibility criteria as published in section 3 of the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) will apply but with some extensions to support equitable partnership working with LMICs including proposals led by LMIC research organisations as detailed below. Strong ODA compliance is an essential eligibility criterion for consideration under this highlight notice. The potential added value of the proposed activities in terms of enhancing impact and benefits within LMICs and contributing to international development will be a key criterion in the assessment of applications. Additionally, a Gender Equalities Statement is required and will be considered as a part of the assessment of applications.

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<sup>1</sup> Applicants should note that a number of upper middle income countries are under review by the OECD (including Antigua and Barbuda, Panama and Palau) and may graduate from the DAC list in 2020 and may no longer be eligible as the primary beneficiaries for ODA (and hence for funding under this highlight notice) once they have graduated from the list. In addition, from 2020/21 (including this highlight notice), the UK's partnerships with China and India under the Global Challenges Research Fund and the Newton Fund will have a renewed focus on delivering global development impact. The UK will continue to work in close partnership with these countries on cutting-edge research, with the primary objective of delivering benefit to developing countries around the world, as well as secondary benefits in the UK, China and India.

In addition to standard AHRC Follow-on Fund eligibility (including overseas co-investigators), proposals led by researchers at LMIC research organisations may be considered in the following circumstances (all apply):

- I. Where the proposed LMIC lead research organisation was a partner / international co-investigator named in the original AHRC-funded project to which the follow-on project relates (or the PI of the original grant confirms that they were a substantial core partner in the original award);
- II. Where applications involve a significant collaborative element with researchers / research organisations in the UK, normally including an academic co-investigator at a UK research organisation eligible for Research Council Funding. This should normally be a member of the original UK project team but could include other UK researchers where appropriate.
- III. A letter of support is provided by PI (or other UK co-I if PI unavailable) of the original GCRF project, outlining how the proposed activities build on the original research and partnerships developed during the original UKRI grant, confirming that they consider the proposed applicants to have the appropriate capabilities to lead the proposed project and are supportive of the proposed activities and providing assurance that relevant issues relating to intellectual property / permissions in respect to the original project have been addressed.
- IV. Unless the proposed LMIC organisation has already completed UKRI due diligence processes, or has received UKRI funding as lead research organisation or is an organisation with which UKRI has a formal partnership agreement, if an award is recommended they will need to complete UKRI due diligence processes before the formal award offer is made.

All four points above (i-iv) must be met in order for an LMIC-led application to be funded.

Please note that applicants from China and India are not eligible to be Principal Investigators under this call but may be included as international co-investigators in line with the AHRC's standard international co-investigators policy (see further details below)

In addition to the normal requirements for the Follow-on Funding Scheme, applications submitted for consideration under this highlight notice must also include:

1. **A paragraph at the start of their case for support explaining how their proposal meets the aims and focus of the highlight notice** (including points i), ii) and iii) under 'aims and focus' above);
2. **A clear summary within the 'case for support' of the pathways through which the project aims to achieve impact relevant to international development**, and also of the intended non-academic collaborators and beneficiaries in ODA recipient countries, and/or in organisations concerned with supporting international development;
3. Within the **Justification of Resources**, include a breakdown of the total costs that are being claimed under the standard UK fund heading, and those that fall under the supplementary funding for international activities.
4. An **ODA compliance statement** as an additional attachment (two sides of A4) providing a full justification for how the proposed follow-on activities meet the requirements for ODA funding (see below). A new ODA compliance statement must be provided even if one was provided with the original AHRC GCRF/ Newton Fund grant.

5. A **Gender Equality Statement** in line with UKRI requirements as specified on the [UKRI Website](#). Additionally applicants 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.

These points/approaches and the potential contribution to international development and addressing gender and wider inequalities should also be embedded in main body of the case for support and other sections of the application as appropriate. This could include, where relevant, those parts of the application relating to: context; aims/objectives; how the application has been developed and the role of individuals or organisations in LMICs (or related international development organisations) in the formation of plans; participation/inclusion/ collaboration; outputs/outcomes; and supporting evidence such as letters of support – please see section below.

In line with current provisions outlined in the AHRC’s Funding Guide, applications under this highlight notice may include, where applicable, overseas co-investigators and/or funding to support collaborative development impact activities undertaken in the ODA recipient countries.

Individuals who applied under the previous highlight notices under the Follow-on Funding scheme for international development (including successful applicants) may submit different applications relating to the same original AHRC/ODA-funded research project under this highlight notice. However, resubmissions of the same application or continuations of previously funded Follow-on Funding applications, are not permitted.

Proposals addressing areas relevant to the highlight notice (including ODA compliant proposals, and follow-up proposals to GCRF or Newton awards) may continue to be submitted to the Follow-on Funding scheme after 13<sup>th</sup> October. However, unless this highlight notice is extended or re-issued, these proposals may not be able to access supplementary funding allocated to the Follow-on Funding scheme to support applications under this highlight notice. They would, furthermore, be expected to comply with the AHRC’s standard eligibility requirements and provisions for international funding, as well as with the standard Follow-On Funding scheme funding limits and durations, and not those outlined in this highlight notice.

## **VI. Guidance on Costs and Project Timescales**

Unless otherwise stated in this highlight notice funding will be issued in accordance with the provisions outlined in the AHRC Research Funding Guide, and with standard UKRI grant terms and conditions.

AHRC’s standard international co-investigator and international funding policy applies (including for co-investigators based in India and China) but with some additional provisions for the costs of LMIC-led applications and for equitable partnership work undertaken at an overseas organisation in Low or Middle Income Countries (i.e. all countries on the DAC list, excluding India and China) as summarised in the following table:



Description	Research Councils Contribution (percent)
Costs incurred for overseas Investigators / Co-Investigators and any locally employed staff, e.g., per cent 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 in the Other Directly Incurred section and ticked 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 (normally no more than 1 FTE per annum), travel and subsistence, other direct costs and overheads. Costs will be funded at 100 per cent 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 per cent of the overall cost of the grant at 100 per cent 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), although a 30% limit applies to third sector organisations and 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 normally 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 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 £150,000 limit (at 100% fEC) for applications under this highlight notice. Please note that as indirect costs can be claimed for overseas (co-)investigators in DAC list countries 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.

In line with the renewed focus for partnerships with India and China, applications that include co-investigators from China and India should clearly justify salary costs. Total costs of grant components from China and India are limited to 30% of the fEC of the proposal. It is expected that international co-investigators from China and India make a significant contribution to their own research costs, including covering their own overheads. Funding may be requested in accordance with AHRC's standard international co-investigators policy and the above additional enhancements (such as the contribution to indirect costs) do not apply to co-investigators or partners based in China or India.

Where projects 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.** Where applications are led by a DAC list partner research organisation, that organisation will itself have to complete UKRI due diligence checks and conduct proportionate due diligence assurance checks on any other non-UK research organisations receiving funding through the grant.

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.**

**Capital or infrastructure expenditure (e.g. basic office/ laboratory / accommodation furniture or equipment, building/ site construction, maintenance or refurbishment work, improvements to digital connective infrastructure, 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. Given the short duration of FoF awards 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 FoF 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 projects. 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 development impact 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.

The latest start date for funded projects is **1 February 2021**; exceptionally in consultation with the AHRC, it may be permissible to delay project start dates beyond this or to extend the duration of awards beyond the 18 month limit due to unanticipated / unavoidable delays to research plans.

## **VII. Application Process and Format**

Unless otherwise stated, the application process and format as published in the AHRC Research Funding Guide will apply.

### **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.

## Je-S accounts

The Principal Investigator, whether from the UK or overseas, must have a Je-S account. Where this doesn't already exist, it can be easily set-up, but please note that it can take a number of days so it is strongly recommended that the process be started well before the application deadline. Je-S accounts can be created on the Je-S site [here](#). During account set-up an account type of '**An Applicant on a Standard/Outline Proposal**' must be selected. If you require assistance with the process please contact the Je-S Helpdesk at [JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org) or +44 (0)1793 44 4164

## Making an application

The AHRC Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement Scheme GCRF Highlight Notice for International Development, offers awards of up to £150,000 (fEC) for a maximum of 18 months. Applications of up to £50,000 (fEC) are encouraged for shorter or higher risk activities, for example testing the feasibility of an idea, exploring new partnerships for knowledge exchange, testing the market or investigating a new business model.

This highlight notice is initially open to applications until **1600 hours on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020**. Proposals relevant to this highlight notice can be submitted at any time before 1600 hours on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2020 and will be processed on receipt; early submission ahead of the end of the highlight is encouraged to avoid possible delays in processing if large numbers of applications are submitted close to the end of the highlight period.

Applications should be submitted through the Je-S system at the latest by **4pm on 13<sup>th</sup> October** and will need to go through the appropriate institution submission process. You should submit your proposal using the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/>).

A separate call for this highlight notice will be available for applications in Je-S from **25<sup>th</sup> August 2020** named "GCRF Intl Develop FoF High 13/10/20"

If you wish to be considered under this highlight notice **please do not submit to the standard follow-on funding (Open Call)**;

To prepare a proposal form in Je-S:

- log-in to your account and choose 'Documents' from the menu;
- then select 'New Document';
- 'AHRC' as the Council,
- 'Standard Proposal' as the Document Type;
- 'Follow-on Funding for Impact and Engagement' as the Scheme;
- 'GCRF Intl Develop FoF High 13/10/20' as the Call/Type/Mode and;
- 'Create Document'.

Je-S will then create a proposal form, displaying the relevant section headings. Using the 'Help' link at the top of each section will provide guidance relevant to that section of the form.

Note that selecting 'Submit document' on your proposal form in Je-S initially submits the proposal to your host organisation's administration, not to AHRC. ***Please remember to allow sufficient time for your organisation's submission process between submitting your proposal to them and the Call closing date.***

Applications should address the aims of the Call as listed in Section 2.

The following are a list of attachments that are permitted for this Call. Please see Section 4 of the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) for further information about these attachments:

<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Requirement and page limits (sides of A4)</b>
Case for Support	Compulsory, no more than 7 sides A4
Curriculum Vitae	Compulsory for the PI, each Co-I and any named researchers, no more than 2 sides A4 each
Publication Lists	Compulsory for the PI, each Co-I and any named researchers, no more than 1 side A4 each
Justification of Resources	Compulsory, no more than 2 sides A4
Project Partner Letter of Support	Compulsory, must be dated within 6 months of submission, no more than 2 sides A4
Original Principal Investigator letter of Support	Compulsory for applications led by LMIC principal investigator/ research organisation and UK –led applications where the original PI is not a named investigator, no more than 1 side A4 (upload using Other attachment type)
Data Management Plan	Compulsory, no more than 2 sides A4
ODA Compliance Statement	Compulsory, no more than 2 sides A4 (upload using Other attachment type)
Gender Equalities Statement	Compulsory, no more than 2 sides A4 (upload using Non-UK Components attachment type)
International Co-I Head of Dept Statement	Optional (upload using Other attachment type)  For LMIC –led applications this is compulsory
Visual Evidence	Optional, no more than 2 sides A4
Workplan	Optional, no more than 1 side A4

## VIII. Assessment Process and Criteria

Unless otherwise stated, the assessment process and criteria as stated in the [AHRC Research Funding Guide](#) will apply. Applications submitted under this highlight will be assessed on the basis of their quality and individual merits, according to standard scheme criteria, but with additional criteria relating to ODA compliance, particularly a focus on the potential impact in LMICs and in terms of international development; other factors such as equitable partnership working and the Gender Equalities Statement will also be taken into account.

Applications under the highlight notice will be considered by a separate assessment panel drawn from AHRC's ODA Peer Review College strategic reviewers group along with other peer reviewers and experts in international development as appropriate. There will be no PI response stage for applications under this highlight notice and we regret that there will be no reviewers' comments for feedback.

We will aim to reduce the time taken to review applications under this highlight so that outcomes on the majority of applications are expected to be announced by late December 2020. The guidance in the AHRC's Funding Guide on earliest possible start dates for the follow-on fund does not apply to applications under this highlight notice. **Applications under this highlight notice will be expected to propose a start date on or between 1 January 2020 and 1 February 2021.** Should successful applicants wish to request a later or delayed start date after **1 February 2021** they should contact the AHRC as soon as possible following the notification of the outcome of their application.

Call timetable

Activity	Date
Application form available in Je-S	<b>25 August 2020</b>
Deadline for submissions	<b>13<sup>th</sup> October 2020</b>
Panel meeting date	Late November 2020
Funding decisions to be issued	Late December 2020
Start date of awards	Between 1 January and 1 February 2021
End date of awards	on or before end of July 2022

## IX. Scheme Requirements and Post Award Reporting

Unless otherwise stated, the scheme requirements and post award reporting as stated in the AHRC Research Funding Guide will apply.

Applications under this highlight notice will be funded under AHRC's GCRF allocation, and as well as reporting through ResearchFish, they may also be subject to some additional reporting requirements.

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 RCUK website here: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/research-outcomes/>

Award holders funded under this highlight notice will be required to report to the AHRC at the earliest opportunity any changes to the proposed activities outlined in the proposal which might substantively affect the grant's ODA compliance (these may include, for example, changes to LMIC / development partner organisations or to the geographic focus of the work, e.g. due to access difficulties).

## **X. Additional Guidance on Completing Applications under this Highlight Notice**

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

GCRF forms part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment, which is monitored by the [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development \(OECD\)](#). ODA-funded activity focuses on outcomes that promote the long-term sustainable growth of countries on the [OECD Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\)](#) list. Only research directly and primarily relevant to the problems of developing countries can be treated as ODA. GCRF funding must be awarded in a manner that fits with [Official ODA guidelines](#).

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.

As outlined above, applications under this highlight notice are required to demonstrate the relevance of their proposed research to ODA requirements in a number of ways. These include:

- provision of a statement on how they fit the highlight notice at the beginning of their case for support;
- requirement to include proposals for collaborating with at least one non-academic partner in one or more of the countries which appear on the DAC list of ODA recipients for 2018-2020 (Low and Middle Income Countries, LMICs) and/or with ODA-eligible international development organisations (a list – updated July 2017 - of large eligible international organisations is maintained by the OECD DAC Committee <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/annex2.htm> but other smaller organisations, charities, cultural and community groups focused on supporting international development may also meet the criteria).
- A clear summary within the ‘case for support’ of the pathways through which the project will contribute to international development policy or practice and/or to the welfare (broadly defined) and development of one or more LMIC (whilst the primary focus of activities must be on LMICs it is recognised that reciprocal benefits may accrue to UK and other non-LMIC partners);
- attachment of an ODA-compliance statement (approx. 2 side of A4) and a Gender Equalities statement (up to 2 sides of A4)

We would also expect most proposals to include the following:

- discussion of how the proposed activities relate to relevant international development policies, challenges or strategies (e.g. UN Goals for Sustainable Development, UK Aid Strategy etc.) and/or the development strategies of the specific LMICs or development organisations involved in the proposed Follow-on Funding activity
- references to relevant research literature, evidence or reports about the value of research in the field covered by the proposed Follow-on Funding activities for international development/LMICs and/or to the theories of change/development which frame the proposed development impact activities;
- discussion of who the beneficiaries within the LMICs are expected to be, and relevant issues of inclusion/exclusion/equalities etc.
- an account of how the proposal has been developed in consultation with, and to reflect the needs of, relevant partners in LMICs/development organisations and/or how perspectives of intended beneficiaries have informed the proposal activities and how the project will ensure equitable partnerships are established with LMIC participants;
- a framework for how development impact of the proposed activities will be analysed/assessed/evaluated, including where appropriate input from expected LMIC research users and beneficiaries; how will you know if the proposed Follow-on Funding activities have successfully made progress towards achieving their proposed development impacts?

In addition, the inclusion of **letters of support** from partners or collaborators in LMICs and/or development organisations can be helpful where these outline (from the partners or collaborators perspective) how the activities would address a development need that they have identified or that has been identified in relevant LMICs local contexts. The letter of support should also outline how the partner or collaborator expects to benefit from collaboration with the network and/or why they



believe the activities would be of benefit to the LMIC in local development contexts. As a minimum we would expect at least one letter of support from a non-academic LMIC or international development partner organisation. Where these letters are in languages other than English, a translation into English should be provided.

An indispensable feature of applications under this highlight notice is expected to be co-development, deep engagement and substantial, genuine, meaningful and equitable **collaboration with international/LMIC partners** throughout the duration of the Follow-on Funding activities. Examples of collaborating bodies might be: relevant development agencies; Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs); Civil Society Organisations (CSOs); industry and other private sector organisations; policy makers; cultural, heritage and creative organisations in LMICs; and other relevant local and international partners. The proposal should explain what expectations or plans there are (as appropriate to the proposal) regarding the long term legacy/sustainability/future development of the collaborations and/or benefits beyond the end of the Follow-on Funding project (if funded).

Full consideration should be given to the relevant **developing country context** (e.g. languages, cultures, faiths, public engagement, legal frameworks, political and regulatory systems) and ethical issues in the planning and conduct of research and implementation of an ethical innovation, and a 'do no harm' duty of care approach. This includes ensuring that appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place to protect participants, researchers' collaborators and data, especially where research may engage with vulnerable groups.

Where appropriate, proposals should outline the languages that activities will be conducted in, and that outputs will be published in, and should justify this where appropriate.

Issues of accessibility, particularly for the poorest groups or marginalised communities, should be considered. This includes, for example, where participants may be in areas affected by low literacy levels or poor access to services/technologies/digital communications.

Activities which support the development of capacity/capabilities in developing countries can be considered. Activities can also be considered where the impacts are expected to be realised in the longer rather than the short to medium term. In such cases inclusion of a clear longer-term theory of change is likely to be important, along with milestones for assessing whether progress (towards achieving this development strategy) is being made. In such cases consideration should be given to how the impacts and legacies might be sustained beyond the end of the Follow-on Funding grant, including for example sustainability of digital or other assets which may be co-produced as a part of the project.

Proposals under the highlight notice should move beyond broad aspirations to engage with relevant partners and provide **evidence that engagement and consultation with relevant partners in LMICs/development organisations has taken place** and has informed the development of the Follow-on Funding proposal.

UKRI has produced some [guidance on ODA compliance for applications for Global Challenges Research Fund](#) which applicants might find helpful in preparing their statement on fit to the highlight notice, at the start of their case for support. This may also prove useful for the more detailed ODA compliance statement (to be attached as a separate document), as well as informing the framing,

focus and development of proposals more generally. The UKRI guidance suggests that in completing a statement on ODA compliance, applicants use the questions below:

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

Applications which are relevant to international development challenges but which do not fully meet the requirements for ODA compliance (for example where addressing development challenges is a secondary rather than a primary focus for the Follow-on Funding activities or where the principal beneficiaries are outside LMICs or wider development contexts), should not be submitted under the highlight notice but may be submitted under the standard AHRC Follow-on Funding scheme. In the light of the renewed focus for the UK's partnerships with China and India under the GCRF and the Newton Fund, proposals where the primary beneficiaries are in China or India should also be submitted to the standard AHRC Follow-on Funding scheme rather than this highlight notice funded as a part of the GCRF

Applications which are not ODA-compliant will not be accepted under the highlight notice. Where applications are not accepted under the highlight notice, the applicant may resubmit a new application through the standard Follow-on Funding scheme route. In such cases, the additional provisions for funding international costs outlined below would not apply. In some cases awards under the highlight notice may be recommended subject to revised or enhanced ODA-compliance statements or gender equalities statements being submitted.

## **XI. 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](mailto:enquiries@ahrc.ukri.org) or telephone: 01793 416060 (available Monday to Friday 8:30-16:00)

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](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org) (available Monday to Friday 08:30 – 5:00).