



# AHRC Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) Urgency Grants pilot

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## II. Introduction

This pilot scheme, funded by the AHRC as a part of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), is intended to be an open, responsive mechanism through which arts and humanities researchers (working with other disciplines where appropriate) can respond in an agile way to unanticipated urgent research needs and opportunities which meet a development need or challenge and/or have the potential to support low or middle income countries (LMICs) to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Proposals for **full economic costs up to £150,000** for a period of **up to 12 months** may be submitted.

As funding for this Pilot Scheme is part of the allocation to the AHRC under the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) (see section below), all applications must be fully compliant with the requirements of Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Applications may be submitted at any time during the period of the pilot scheme. Applicants interested in applying should first submit an expression of interest to the AHRC at the earliest opportunity following the emergence of the urgency need or context. If the expression of interest is considered to fall within the scope of the scheme, applicants will then be invited to submit a full application through Je-S for consideration through an accelerated peer review process.

This Pilot Scheme will close to new expressions of interest at **1600 hours on 31 October 2020** after which AHRC will review the pilot and may consider extending or revising the scheme.

### III. Context

One of the objectives of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is to enable an agile response to emergencies. Circumstances where such a research response to ‘emergencies’ might be appropriate under the GCRF include:

- There is a clear and important knowledge gap
- There is potential to inform and improve future approaches
- There is a time limited/critical opportunity to conduct research and/or access/capture data
- There is a clear development need and activities would be ODA compliant.

In some cases UKRI / GCRF delivery partners may issue targeted calls in response to specific emergencies. Where no such call has been issued, the AHRC urgency grants mechanism is intended to provide an open, responsive mechanism for arts and humanities researchers to respond in an agile way to unanticipated urgent research needs and opportunities which meet a development need or challenge and/or have the potential to support low or middle income countries to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### IV. Aims of the Call

#### A. Scope

AHRC GCRF urgency grants allow arts and humanities researchers to respond rapidly to unexpected and transient events affecting international development, including (but not limited to) disasters, humanitarian emergencies, rapid radical political or economic change, changes to conflicts, major displacements of populations etc., or unanticipated time-limited opportunities for research to contribute to international development policy or practice.

AHRC urgency grants operate on an open date (no closing dates) responsive mode basis, i.e. applications may be submitted at any time during the life of the pilot scheme and on any subject within AHRC’s remit provided that they meet the scheme eligibility, including ODA compliance, criteria. However, in some circumstances, AHRC may issue highlight notices within the scheme to

encourage applications in response to specific emergencies.

Initially the scheme is being run for a pilot period up to October 2020 at which point we will review whether to continue or amend the terms of the scheme.

Applications for AHRC urgency grants could fall under either of the two main categories below:

- i. Research (including the collection, analysis or critical interpretation of data) into the short term impacts of / informing responses or resilience to or recovery from a range of specific events affecting Low or Middle Income countries (LMICs) which could not have been planned for in advance, such as:
  - cultural, humanitarian, political or economic emergencies or crises and their impacts on issues such as cultural production /expression, equalities, marginalisation, vulnerabilities, social exclusion, etc.);
  - unexpected (de-)escalation or rapid changes to conflicts, human rights abuses, threats to human security, or peacebuilding processes;
  - unanticipated large scale forced population displacement/ migrations;
  - environmental disasters (both natural and/or resulting from human activity), e.g. earthquake, tsunami, volcanic eruption, hurricane, major pollution incident, dam collapse, etc.;
  - famines, health emergencies (e.g. disease outbreaks /pandemics); and/or
  - sudden large scale destruction of/damage to cultural heritage/assets
  
- ii. An unexpected opportunity to conduct substantive research over a period of months informing, observing or collecting data at, or to participate in (e.g. placements) a one-off time-limited major policy or practice event (e.g. a peacebuilding / reconciliation process, public inquiry, policy review process) which offer a substantial and unique opportunity for innovative research, research synthesis and/or knowledge exchange relating to international development and/or directly relating to development in one or more LMIC.

The following situations will not be accepted as grounds for an urgency proposal:

- proposals without clear research context, aims, objectives, added-value and outcomes or where the prime focus of activities is not directly related to research;
- additional / unexpected pathways to impact activities up to £30,000 fEC from past / current AHRC projects which could be considered through the accelerated route under the AHRC's Follow-on Scheme for Impact and Engagement (applications for £30k-100k can be considered where existing FoF timetables would not provide decisions in sufficient time to meet the research need / opportunity);
- unforeseen opportunities to participate in time-limited / one-off/ short logistical events, such as a particular cultural, arts, experimental or observational programme /event / exhibition/ performance, or to exploit the unexpected availability of staff or facilities;

- events where planning could have allowed support for study via published funding opportunities, such as anniversaries, commemorations, seasonal, relatively frequent, annual or periodic events, regular festivals, future planned exhibitions or where the urgency results from a slow response by the applicants in preparing proposals or plans;
- attendance at, or organisation of, academic conferences/ workshops;
- replacement funding for activities for which funding has unexpectedly been withdrawn, although it is recognised that the withdrawal of funding could in some cases create an unexpected urgent research need or opportunity;
- proposals for infrastructure or facilities (e.g. building repairs or reconstruction) (although research could inform such activities funded through other sources) or primarily concerned with heritage conservation/ preservation activities, although urgent research / data collection activities linked to heritage which has unexpectedly become 'at risk' may be considered;
- proposals which do not lead to open access publications, data or other research outcomes (for example, where the prime outputs or data are solely intended for internal use by a partner organization);
- responding to unexpected research findings or continuation of existing projects, unless this would also meet the urgency criteria outlined in this call.

In addition, a research application may not be deemed appropriate for urgency funding where it could hinder emergency response/humanitarian efforts or there are judged to be unacceptably high safety and/or security risks to researchers and/or potential research participants and/or where research would potentially exacerbate gender or other inequalities.

AHRC reserves the right to limit the number of urgency proposals considered or supported relating to the same event or location and/or to encourage collaboration between researchers submitting similar EOIs. AHRC will not accept more than one urgency proposal from an individual investigator in a one-year period.

## **B. Global Challenges Research Fund and Requirements for ODA Compliance**

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.

Further information about GCRF is available on [AHRC's website](#).

When assessing whether an activity is eligible for GCRF funding under this pilot, 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. Further details are provided below.

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

In terms of the LMIC context, we are open to proposals based in any country (countries) or context(s) on the DAC list of ODA recipients. However, please note that consideration will need to be given with regards to proposals focused primarily on upper middle income countries expected to graduate from the DAC list over the next few years which, depending on project timing and duration, are potentially not able to be supported under this call; this includes: Antigua and Barbuda; Panama; Palau; Argentina and China. Partners from such countries could of course be included within projects and such countries could be included in multi-country studies involving other DAC list countries.

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.

Proposals focused on other Upper Middle Income countries will be considered but are encouraged 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 learning.

**Applications which are not ODA-compliant will not be accepted under the pilot call.**

## **V. Remit and Eligibility**

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 distinctive arts and humanities research concepts, ideas and/or approaches centrally into the development of relevant cross-disciplinary fields. In order to be considered under this pilot call **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.**

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

Submission of an urgency grant proposal is only permitted if relying on other published funding opportunities would clearly result in a missed opportunity to undertake high quality arts and humanities research of importance and significance to international development and the welfare of communities in low or middle income countries.

Proposals must fully meet the requirements for ODA compliance and an **ODA compliance statement and gender equalities statement must be provided with full proposals.**

Applicants do not need to have received prior AHRC (or UKRI) funding either through GCRF or other funding routes. However, applications which build upon or extend past or current AHRC/ UKRI research in ways which could not have been anticipated at the time of application/ award and fall within the urgency categories outlined above can also be considered through this urgency route.

The principal investigator must normally meet standard AHRC eligibility criteria and awards will normally be made to a UK research organisation eligible to receive AHRC funding. International co-investigators and project partners may be included. Moreover, it is recognised that in some urgency contexts it may be appropriate for a significant elements of the research to be led or conducted by LMIC or other partners 'on the ground' or with relevant contextual / cultural knowledge. Therefore there are no limits on the proportions of funding within awards which may be allocated to overseas or other partners.

Exceptionally, proposals led by researchers at LMIC organisations may be considered. Given the time required to complete due diligence processes, such proposals would normally only be considered where the LMIC organisation has already completed UKRI due diligence processes and has received UKRI funding as lead research organisation or with which UKRI has a formal partnership agreement. Such applications should 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.

In some cases urgency funding may be channelled through current AHRC awards such as Network Plus where the Network Plus may fund an LMIC-led proposal. In such cases the Network Plus would need to submit an application in collaboration with the proposed LMIC lead organisation.

Applicants led by UK research organisations where substantial amounts of funded activity is being undertaken by LMIC partners, will need to provide assurance, in consultation with their research organisation, that relevant and proportionate due diligence checks have either already been completed (e.g. existing partner organisation) or can be completed on an accelerated basis. A risk based approach should be undertaken taking into account the levels of funding involved, previous track record of the partners and potential to deploy risk management measures. Similarly assurances must be provided that safeguarding, ethical, risk and safety assessments can be conducted/ accelerated within the timeframes required to deliver the research, without compromising on safeguarding, ethical, safety, due diligence and risk management standards.

## VI. Application Process and Format

Prospective applicants should first submit an expression of interest to the AHRC to ascertain its suitability for consideration under the urgency mechanism before submitting a full proposal for consideration under the urgency scheme.

### A. Expression of Interest (EOI)

All Expressions of Interest (EOI) must be submitted through Smart Survey using this link:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/GCRFUrgencyCall/>

The survey includes the following sections, all of which must be completed:

1. **Principle Investigator Title**
2. **Principle Investigator Forename**
3. **Principle Investigator Surname**
4. **Principle Investigator Organisation:** this will be the organisation or institution that holds and administers the grant
5. **Principle Investigator Email Address**
6. **Principle Investigator's current position**
7. **Any previous relevant funding received from the below funding organisations/routes:** a check-list of funders is provided, along with a free-text box for any not listed
8. **Short Biography** (max 300 words)
9. **Project Title:** please ensure this clearly flags-up the core research focus of the project
10. **Intended start date of project**
11. **Duration of project:** number of months
12. **Estimated Requested Amount:** this should be the full fEC amount required. Whilst it is acknowledged that this will be an estimate at EOI stage, AHRC would expect amounts requested at full-application stage to be within +/-10% of the figure listed on the EOI and still within scheme maxima
13. **Remit:** Please describe the arts and humanities research expertise, literature, methodologies, context and concepts or approaches at the core of the project that sit within the remit of the AHRC. Further information regarding AHRC remit can be found in the [Research Funding Guide](#), pp. 77–85. (max 300 words)
14. **Urgency Case:** Please summarise how the proposal fits the criteria for consideration under the urgency scheme. In particular, why the research needs to be done within specified time constraints and could not be supported through other funding routes. It is crucial that the case for urgency is succinctly and clearly made in this section in order for the project to be invited to submit to the full application stage. (max 500 words)
15. **ODA Eligibility:** It is a fundamental requirement of this scheme that all applications meet Official Development Assistance (ODA) requirements. Full applications will be required to submit an ODA Compliance Statement covering three areas:

- 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?
- How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries?
- 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?

For the EOI, please briefly summarise how the project will meet these requirements. (max 300 words)

- 16. People, Partnerships and Structure:** Please explain why the individuals/organisations/partners involved are the most appropriate for undertaking the proposed activities, how the project will support equitable partnership ways of working, and where relevant any capacity building for LMIC partners and/or support for any early career researchers involved, including proposed management arrangements and roles. (max 350 words)
- 17. Outcomes:** Please outline the intended research outputs and outcomes of your project, together with a plan for sustainability and legacy. Please also indicate how these will make a contribution to development within an ODA context. (max 300 words)
- 18. Feasibility:** Please indicate any barriers or obstacles that you may anticipate in relation to your project. A more in depth statement will be required in the full application. (max 300 words)

Given the urgency requirement at the core of this scheme, applicants are encouraged to submit EOIs at an early rather than an advanced stage in the development of research plans. This EOI will be used only to consider suitability for consideration under the urgency scheme and will not form part of the assessment process.

If the outline proposal is considered suitable for consideration under the urgency grants scheme, the applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal to the AHRC via the Je-S system at the earliest opportunity.

Once received, AHRC will assess EOIs to ascertain that they meet the key eligibility criteria of this scheme, and (wherever feasible) inform applicants within five working days of receipt. Depending on the information supplied in the EOI, applicants will either be:

- Invited to submit a full application via Je-S (see below)
- Informed that their application does not meet the urgency requirements and to instead apply to another AHRC scheme or call
- Informed that their application does not meet the ODA eligibility requirements and to instead apply to another non-GCRF scheme or call
- Informed that the EOI does not contain sufficient information to reach a decision, and so asked to supply further specific details of the project



## B. Full Application Stage

Applicants that are invited to submit a full proposal will need to open a new application in Je-S. (<https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx>). This application will be expected to provide firm details and costings of the project, and will be subject to an accelerated peer-review process. Except where specifically noted in this call guidance document, standard AHRC policies and guidelines will apply (see [Research Funding Guide](#)).

**To apply:** Please select Document Type 'Standard Proposal', Scheme 'Development Grants' and Call 'AHRC GCRF Urgency Grants open call'.

This EOI should be submitted as close as possible from the first occurrence of the research opportunity and should be submitted at an early rather than an advanced stage in the development of research plans. This EOI will be used only to consider suitability for consideration under the urgency scheme and will not form part of the assessment process.

If the outline proposal is considered suitable for consideration under the urgency grants scheme, the applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal to the AHRC via the Je-S system at the earliest opportunity. Please select Document Type 'Standard Proposal', Scheme 'Development Grants' and Call 'AHRC GCRF Urgency Grants open call'.

Applicants will normally be expected to submit the full Je-S application within four weeks from the invitation to apply after which the invitation to apply will lapse; if it is not possible to submit the application within four weeks applicants should contact the AHRC to discuss whether an extended application window is exceptionally allowable.

The full application should include **a case for support of no more than 6 sides of A4** covering the following issues:

- **case for urgency funding** – summary of how the proposal fits the criteria for consideration under the urgency scheme (in particular why the research needs to be done within specified time constraints and could not be supported through other funding routes) (this section may draw heavily on the EOI submission) and key benefits for LMICs in line with ODA compliance;
- **research context**, including added value to the existing research literature / data or innovation, originality / novelty, as appropriate, as well as the wider LMIC cultural and development context for the research;
- **research aims and objectives**, including contribution to addressing development challenges, intended benefits/ beneficiaries and the potential distinctive contribution that arts and humanities research can make to the development challenges addressed;
- **research contribution and importance** – expected ways that the research will contribute to advancing knowledge, understanding, data, etc.;
- **research expertise and partnerships** – why the individuals/ organisations / partners involved are the most appropriate for undertaking the proposed activities, how the project will support equitable partnership ways of working (& where relevant capacity building

and support for any early career researchers involved) and proposed management arrangements and roles;

- **proposed research activities / methods and feasibility** of conducting the proposed activities with the outlined timeframe and in the particular urgency context, including plans for addressing risks, safeguarding, due diligence and gender (and where appropriate wider) equalities;
- **research outputs / outcomes / sustainability / legacy**, including contribution to development;

In addition, the following attachments should be provided:

1. A **Justification of Resources**, including a breakdown of the total costs that are being claimed under the standard UK funding guidance regarding full economic costing (fEC), and those that fall under the supplementary funding rules for international activities as set out in Section VIII of this call guidance.
2. **Project plan / timetable** e.g. Gantt chart
3. An **ODA compliance statement** as an additional attachment (one side of A4) providing a full justification for how the research network meets the requirements for ODA funding. The RCUK guidance suggests that in completing a statement on ODA compliance applicants use the questions below:
  - i. Which country/ countries on the DAC list [with the exception of Antigua and Barbuda, Chile and Uruguay which are expected to graduate from the next 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?
  - ii. How is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries?
  - iii. 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. **Short CVs** (maximum of one page) for investigators / named researchers. **Please note** separate publications lists are not required for this call, and any limited relevant publication information that applicants feel is relevant should be included within the short CVs.
5. Where possible, **letters of support** from key partners or collaborators in LMICs and/or development organisations which outline, from the partners'/ collaborators' perspective, how the activities would address a development need they have identified or which has been identified in relevant LMICs local contexts. Letters/emails confirming access/collaboration arrangements may also be submitted where appropriate. **Letters of support must not exceed two side of A4.** However, we recognize that it may not be possible to secure letters of support from all potential collaborators in the time available.
6. A **pathways to impact statement**, with particular focus on users and beneficiaries in LMICs

and/or of direct relevance to international development policy/practice, and which describes the pathways and activities through which it is expected that the research project will make a contribution to:

- the economic development of, and/or to the welfare (broadly defined) of people in, one or more LMIC

and/or

- international development policy or international development practice in LMICs.

Details should be provided of planned engagement with non-academic collaborators or partners in ODA recipient countries and/or with organisations concerned with supporting international development in LMICs (e.g. aid, humanitarian or development agencies, educational organisations or charities or cultural organisations etc.).

7. A **Gender Equality Statement** in line with UKRI requirements as specified in 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.
8. **Data management plan** of up to 2 sides of A4, only where applicable (i.e. the proposal involves generating working with significant new data)

Unless stated otherwise in this call document, or in additional conditions of award, AHRC Urgency awards will be issued in accordance with standard AHRC and UKRI grant terms and conditions as outlined in AHRC's [Research Funding Guide](#).

### **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.

## VII. Guidance on Costs and Project Timescales

The maximum funding that may be sought for an Urgency proposal is £150,000; this limit applies to the total (100%) full economic cost of the project, of which AHRC will fund the UK component at 80% fEC.

LMIC investigator / partner costs may be funded at 100% fEC and further guidance is provided under section VIII of this call document. 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.

Urgency proposals can last up to **12 months** and are expected to focus on the urgent research, data collection and analysis and reporting, although no-cost extensions may be considered where research / data collection is unavoidably delayed due to conditions 'on the ground' or further unanticipated events. A clear strategy is required for producing academic and other outputs beyond the one-year funding period, for the sustained management of any data collected or produced as a part of the research and for taking the research forward once the urgent phase is completed. Publication and data management plans should meet UKRI standard requirements for open access.

Note that no studentships can be funded via this scheme. Applicants must be of post-doctoral or equivalent standing. Equipment costs (up to £10,000) can only be considered through this route in exceptional circumstances. Separate contingency budgets should not be included in proposals. However, it is recognised that some costings may be estimated and provisional and that there may be a need for greater flexibility than normal to vire funds within the award to ensure effective delivery

Urgency proposals are assessed using the following criteria:

- fit to call, including case for urgency funding, ODA compliance and potential for distinctive arts and humanities research contributions;
- research contribution and importance – potential for the research to make a significant and original contribution to knowledge, understanding, data and/or research capabilities and to add significant value to existing research;
- research expertise and partnerships – extent to which the proposal provides a convincing case that the individuals/ organisations / partners involved are appropriate for undertaking the proposed activities and that it will promote equitable partnerships and ways of working;
- feasibility of proposed activities / methods, including appropriate plans for addressing risks, safeguarding, due diligence and gender (and where appropriate wider) equalities, effective management arrangements and a realistic project plan;
- inclusion of a strong Pathways to Impact Statement and clear potential to for significant impact and benefits for the development and welfare of people in low and/or middle income countries;

- extent to which the research proposal includes appropriate plans for significant research outputs and outcomes and plans for the future sustainability / legacy of the research;
- value for money.

We anticipate that 6-10 urgency awards might be funded through this initial pilot phase, subject to demand and quality of applications submitted. In the event of high demand and high quality applications we may seek to increase funding so that more awards can be supported.

## VIII. Further Information on Eligible International Costs for Urgency Grants Pilot

AHRC's standard international co-investigator and international funding policy applies but with some additional provisions for the costs of equitable partnership work undertaken at an overseas organisation in Low or Middle Income Countries (i.e. all countries on the DAC list) 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 Co-Investigators and any locally employed staff, e.g. percent of actual salary based on time worked on the grant (entered 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 as exceptions on Je-S form).	100
Costs incurred by overseas investigators or staff for travel and expenses (entered 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 co-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 co-investigator costs for individuals based in developing countries (on the DAC list), 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 co-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 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 £60,000 limit (at 100% fEC) for applications under this highlight notice. 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 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.

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.

Funding for PhD or masters studentships cannot be included in networking awards. However, involvement of students and early career researchers in research activities and/or related training or capability building activities is encouraged and appropriate support costs (e.g. travel and subsistence) can be included within proposals.

## **IX. Assessment Process and Criteria**

Urgency proposals are assessed using the following criteria:

- fit to call, including case for urgency funding, ODA compliance and potential for distinctive arts and humanities research contributions;
- research contribution and importance – potential for the research to make a significant and original contribution to knowledge, understanding, data and/or research capabilities and to add significant value to existing research;
- research expertise and partnerships – extent to which the proposal provides a convincing case that the individuals/ organisations / partners involved are appropriate for undertaking the proposed activities and that it will promote equitable partnerships and ways of working;
- feasibility of proposed activities / methods, including appropriate plans for addressing risks, safeguarding, due diligence and gender (and where appropriate wider) equalities, effective management arrangements and a realistic project plan;

- inclusion of a strong Pathways to Impact Statement and clear potential to for significant impact and benefits for the development and welfare of people in low and/or middle income countries;
- extent to which the research proposal includes appropriate plans for significant research outputs and outcomes and plans for the future sustainability / legacy of the research;
- value for money.

We anticipate that 6-10 urgency awards might be funded through this initial pilot phase, subject to demand and quality of applications submitted. In the event of high demand and high quality applications we may seek to increase funding so that more awards can be supported.

Urgency proposals will be considered through an accelerated streamlined peer review process, normally involving review by two members of AHRC's Strategic ODA Peer Review College Group but may involve other experts where appropriate. In cases of multiple applications being received within similar time periods addressing the same (or inter-related) urgency / emergency context we may send applications to the same reviewers in order to seek advice on the prioritisation of applications.

Where proposals are judged of a high quality through this initial peer review process, a final decision on funding will be taken by AHRC in the light of availability of, and other potential demands on, funding and potential added value and strategic contribution to AHRC's GCRF portfolio.

A sift will apply where two reviewers agree that a proposal is unfundable and the proposal will normally be rejected at this stage with an applicant response stage. Where a proposal receives reviews which are divergent in terms of whether a proposal is fundable, views from a third peer reviewer may be taken who will act as a 'moderator', normally following an opportunity for applicants to respond to peer review comments.

Comments from peer reviewers will normally be fed back to applicants with the notification of the outcome of the application but in some circumstances (e.g. divergent reviewer recommendations, where reviewers raise significant questions requiring a response before a funding decision can be taken) we will seek to provide an opportunity for a rapid response to issues raised in the review process. However, please note that given the rapid turn-around times given to reviewers they may not provide the same levels of detailed feedback as a standard grant application.

Our aim is to complete the review process within four weeks from submission of the full proposal in Je-S but this may take longer, for example where responses to feedback or conditions are required.

AHRC reserves the right to adjust the review process to meet the requirements for urgency and a full, rigorous and transparent peer review process, for example by seeking supplementary advice from additional or specialist reviewers where appropriate.

We recognise that some proposals may unavoidably involve a higher level of risk or uncertainty about outcomes than a standard grant. In some cases funding recommendations may be subject to specific conditions being met or funding may be agreed for an initial period or amount only, with funding for the full period subject reporting of satisfactory progress at specified break points. Funded proposals will be allocated to an AHRC case officer and will be expected to provide that case officer with updates on progress and to respond in a timely way to requests from that case officer for progress updates.

Resubmission of any full proposal considered through the Urgency Grants route which is unsuccessful, either to the Urgency scheme or any other UKRI funding scheme, is not permitted unless the proposal is



substantially revised and/or applicants are specifically invited or advised to resubmit by the AHRC

## X. Call timetable

Activity	Date
Application forms available on Je-S	11 July 2019
Deadline for submissions	16.00 hours 31 October 2020
Funding decisions to be issued	4 Weeks from full application being submitted via Je-S
Start date of awards	Rolling

## XI. 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. Some additional award conditions and reporting requirements linked to ODA funding will apply and applicants will be required to report any substantive changes to awards which may affect ODA compliance (as outlined in the ODA compliance statement) to the AHRC at the earliest opportunity.

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

## XII. 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 (Monday to Friday 08:30–16:30).

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](mailto:JeSHelp@je-s.ukri.org) (Monday to Friday 08:30–17:00).

\*\*End of Document\*\*

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