



## AHRC-MRC Global Public Health; Partnership Awards Call Guidance for Applicants

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### I. Important application information

The total funding available for this call from the Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) is £2million.

- Small Partnership Awards with total costs of no more than £50,000 fEC; with a duration of no longer than 18 months and be used for initial activities that will build new partnerships between UK and LMIC researchers across the MRC and AHRC disciplines, with a focus on global public health.
- Large Partnership Awards with total costs of no more than £200,000 fEC ; with the duration between 18-24months and include a comprehensive package of work that will build new or develop existing partnerships between UK and LMIC researchers across the MRC and AHRC disciplines, with a focus on global public health.

The funding requested should be commensurate with the activities intended for these projects but as they are not intended to fund pure research or basic science, the main costs for these are likely to be staff wages and travel costs.

Applications under this call can be for Small Partnership Awards or Large Partnership Awards.

The Research Councils expect to make around 10 awards under each category but will make the final funding decision based on the quality of applications received.

**Applications should be submitted through the Je-S system at the latest by 26<sup>th</sup> October 2017. Further information on how to apply via Je-S can be found in section IV.**

### Call timetable

Activity	Date
Application forms available on Je-S	28 <sup>th</sup> August 2017
Webinar	TBC
<b>Deadline for submissions</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> October 2017 16:00 BST</b>
Panel Meeting	Early December 2017
Decisions to be sent out	Mid January 2017
Start date of awards	01 <sup>st</sup> January – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018

## II. Eligibility

Applications need to be submitted by an eligible UK Research Organisation, with a UK Principal Investigator and all funding will be managed through that organisation. UK Investigators and Institutions should meet the contractual eligibility as laid out in section 3 of the [AHRC funding guide](#) MRC [Guidance for Applicants](#) and the [RCUK website](#).

Researchers from Low and Middle Income Country (LMIC) Higher Education Institutions and non-profit research institutions are welcomed as Co-Investigators on proposals.

Please note applications involving animals will not be eligible for this call.

*Funding for Masters and PhD studentships is not eligible under this call.*

### International Co-Investigators

International Co-Investigators are eligible for funding through this call in accordance with MRC's policy. To build collaboration with LMICs some further flexibility is provided as detailed in Annex A Guidance on Costs and Project Timescales

Proposals should be submitted on a full economic cost basis recognising that UK research organisation costs will be supported at 80 per cent FEC. Guidance for the costs for work undertaken at an overseas organisation are outlined in Annex A.

Projects funded under this call for :

Small Partnership Awards should be for a duration of no longer than 18 months

Large Partnership Awards should be 18-24 months

Projects must start between 1<sup>st</sup> January – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

## **ODA Compliance**

As this funding call is being supported as a part of the GCRF an ODA Compliance statement must be submitted as an attachment to all applications. **Projects must demonstrate how they are ODA compliant** and will contribute to the economic development and welfare of developing countries. Further information on ODA compliance under the GCRF is available [here](#). Applicants are encouraged to pay close attention to the three guiding questions when completing their ODA compliance statement:

- a) 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?
- b) How is your proposal **directly and primarily** relevant to the development challenges of these countries?
- c) 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?

In completing the ODA compliance statement applicants should ensure they clearly address these three guiding questions. Failure to do so may lead to the application being rejected.

## **III. Small Partnership Awards**

Based on feedback from the first call for Global Public Health Partnership Awards we are introducing into this second call a second lower limit for smaller partnership awards. These smaller awards are designed to support partnerships at the very early stages of development which may not yet be in a position to adequately justify applying for larger amounts of money.

Proposals submitted for Small Partnership Awards will be assessed against the same criteria as the Large Partnership Awards, set out in Annex C below. However, the Research Councils will look to fund a balance of Small and Large Partnership Awards. The exact balance between Small and Large Partnership Awards will be primarily based on the quality of applications received.

The type of award being applied for should be clearly indicated at the start of the Case for Support.

## **IV. Application Process and Format**

Applications should be submitted through the Je-S system at the latest by **4pm (BST) on 26<sup>TH</sup> October 2017**, 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/>).

To prepare a proposal form in Je-S:

- log-in to your account and choose 'Documents' from the menu;
- then select 'New Document';
- 'MRC' as the Council,
- 'Research Grant' as the Document Type;
- 'RCUK' as the Scheme;

- 'AHRC-MRC Global Public Health: Partnership Call 26/10/17' as the Call/Type/Mode and
- 'Create Document'.

Je-S will then create a proposal form, displaying the relevant section headings. 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 MRC. ***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 the Call Specification.

The following are a list of attachments that are permitted for this Call:

#### **Mandatory Attachments**

<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Page limits</b>
Case for Support	Seven sides of A4 (Further guidance on this is provided in Annex B)
Curriculum Vitae	Two sides of A4 each (only for named project staff)
Publication Lists	One side of A4 each (only for named project staff)
Justification of Resources	Two sides of A4
Pathways to Impact	Two sides of A4
Project Partner Letter of Support	Two sides of A4 each (only for named project partners)
International Co-I Head of Dept Statement	Two sides of A4 each
ODA Compliance Statement	Two sides of A4 (upload in Je-S using type 'Other')

#### **Optional Attachments**

<b>Attachment</b>	<b>Page limits</b>
Visual Evidence	Two sides of A4
Letters of Support	Two sides of A4

#### **V. Assessment Process**

Proposals will be assessed by a streamlined peer review process involving consideration by a specially convened, expert, multi-disciplinary assessment panel that will meet in December 2017. Membership will be drawn from a broad range of AHRC and MRC related disciplines. **Full assessment criteria are listed in Annex C.**

#### **VI. Scheme Requirements and Post Award Reporting**

Award holders will be required to submit outputs, outcomes and impacts that arise from the Research Councils' 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 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: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/researchoutcomes/>.

## **VII. Contact Information**

For queries about this call such as eligible activities and costs or remit of the call please contact [International@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk](mailto:International@headoffice.mrc.ac.uk) or telephone: 01793 416213 (available Monday to Friday 9:00-5:00).

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@rcuk.ac.uk](mailto:jeshelp@rcuk.ac.uk) (available Monday to Friday 9:00 – 5:00).

## VIII. Annex A Provisions for International Collaborative Research Activities

Applications under this call should be submitted on a full economic cost basis recognising that UK research organisation costs will be supported at 80 per cent FEC.

AHRC's standard international co-investigator policy applies but has been adapted to bring it more closely in line with the MRC's co-investigator policy and other GCRF calls to include some additional provisions for the costs of work undertaken at an overseas organisation in Low or Middle Income Countries (on the DAC list) as summarised in the following table:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Research Councils Contribution (percent)</b>
Costs incurred for overseas Co-Investigators and any locally employed staff, e.g., per cent of actual salary based on time worked on the grant (entered as Other DI exceptions on Je-S form).	<b>100</b>
Costs incurred by the overseas organisation and associated with the research, e.g., consumables, field work etc. (entered as Other DI exceptions on Je-S form).	<b>100</b>
Costs incurred by overseas investigators or staff for travel and expenses (entered as Other DI exceptions on Je-S form).	<b>100</b>
A contribution towards indirect and estates costs at overseas organisations in developing countries is permissible, calculated at up to 20% of the total salary costs charged to the grant for all overseas staff in developing countries (entered as Other DI exceptions on Je-S form).	<b>100</b>

Applicants should seek contributions from project partners, e.g., business, government and third sector organisations where appropriate. In acknowledgment of the fact 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 (up to 1 year FTE), travel and subsistence, other direct costs and overheads. Costs will be funded at 100 per cent FEC and should be entered as exceptions on J-eS form. Total costs associated with third sector bodies' contribution must not exceed 30 per cent of the overall cost of the grant at 100 per cent FEC.

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

- i) the 30% limit on total overseas co-investigator costs is removed 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 co-investigators, costs for third sector / NGO partners may also be funded at 100% FEC, subject to 30% overall limit of the total cost of an award at 100% FEC
- 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 salary costs charged to the grant for all overseas staff; 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)

## IX. Annex B Additional guidance for Case for Support

The Case for Support for both Small and Large Partnership awards **must** use the following headings. Failure to use these heading may lead to the application being rejected. Applicants should address the points highlighted under each heading.

### **Type of award being applied for**

- State whether the application is for a Small or Large Partnership Award.

### **Importance**

- State the aims of the partnership
- Explain why establishing a partnership is appropriate, and significant for this area(s) of global public health research in relation to LMICs
- Explain how establishing a partnership will facilitate the work of the applicants in order to increase productivity and create added value
- Provide justification as to why the elements of support requested cannot be met through other means

### **Partnership Plans**

- Describe the research methods and activities associated with the partnership. Explain why these methods have been chosen and how they were identified as being appropriate to help advance understanding of the specific public health challenges in the chosen LMIC/s. Please include precise timelines and indicate where activities may be concurrent. You may include a Gantt chart to depict this.
- For any requests for infrastructure or equipment, please state how this will be used by the partners to further the aims and objectives of the partnership<sup>1</sup>
- Please describe how the partnership will advance the scientific area, and outline future plans:
  - for sustaining the partnership beyond the proposed duration of AHRC-MRC funding
  - to obtain further funding (from Research Councils or elsewhere) to support any follow-on hypothesis-driven research, which may develop as a result of the partnership

### **Participants in the partnership and existing funding**

Provide the following information for the participants taking part in the partnership:

- How the Partnership grant will enable researchers to work together and how it will build interdisciplinary capability in a key strategic area, including highlighting how the partnership is bringing together researchers who otherwise would not work together from the two communities. There should be clear discrimination between CoIs and partners/collaborators.

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<sup>1</sup> The normal AHRC restrictions regarding claiming costs for equipment apply. Individual items of equipment up to £10,000 (including VAT) are permissible to be included in the FEC of the proposal and should be included in the 'Directly Incurred – Other' fund heading. Items should not be added under the 'Equipment' heading. AHRC cannot support the funding of individual items of equipment costing more than £10,000 (including VAT). Therefore, if your project requires the use of equipment at this value, this will need to be provided from other sources.



- Describe how the proposal will support capacity building including: building UK research investigators understanding of national/local contexts of LMICs and an understanding of the local research context.
- How the partnership between the participants will benefit the wider community and the research field including primarily LMICs
- Justification as to how each of the named investigators will contribute to the partnership, including their level of time commitment.
- Explain why the specific research expertise of the partners and researchers has been chosen. You should detail the added value the interdisciplinary perspectives from the arts and humanities and medical sciences (and more widely where appropriate) and non-academic collaborations will bring to the public health themes being addressed.

### **Research Environment and Activities**

- Describe the environment(s) in which the partnership will take place (e.g. how the proposed activities fit with the strategies, expertise, capabilities, other research projects, etc. of the research and other organisations involved )
- What support is to be provided to the partnership by the organisations involved? This should include details on the support and development activities in place for UK and LMIC staff involved in the project.
- If the proposal requests shared equipment describe where this will be sited and how it will be supported by the host RO(s). Also describe the management arrangements for ensuring equity of access.<sup>1</sup>

### **Management**

- Provide an overview of how the partnership will be managed, for example plans for regular meetings, plans for bringing together disparate communities, strategy for the set-up of networks, approach to developing equitable partnerships / partnerships of equivalence, including issues of accessibility, equalities / inclusion, language differences etc., arrangements for access and upkeep of equipment. Please note, while networking or workshop activities can add value to a partnership, applications centred only on these types of activities will not be accepted.
- Detail the roles of investigators/ project leaders and support staff and membership and role of any advisory groups if appropriate.

### **Outcomes and Legacy**

- Outline a dissemination strategy for the partnership activities. Details should be included of any specific steps are planned to ensure that outcomes will be communicated with target users and/or beneficiaries, including in relevant international development and/or LMICs contexts (e.g. issues relating to contexts specific languages, dissemination, feedback to participants, etc.)
- Include a summary of any key expected outputs that the partnership activities will contribute to, their proposed focus and the target audiences. For publications please indicate where you envision that these might be published. For learning / capability / capacity enhancement please indicate who is expected to participate / benefit.
- Provide an outline of what you see as being the key indicators of success from the partnership activities and how you will assess whether these have been achieved.
- Explain what you see as the longer term benefits from the partnership, including where appropriate plans for sustaining partnership activities or securing the longer-term value from the partnership beyond the end of the partnership award

## **X. Annex C Assessment Criteria**

All proposal will be assessed against the extent to which the proposal meets the specific aims of the call, including fit to the overall objectives of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF). In addition, the following will be taken into account when assessing proposals under this call:

### **Quality and innovation**

- the significance and importance of the objectives the partnership and research issues to be explored,
- the degree of innovation within the context of the wider global public health research field
- the extent to which the proposal would support the development of genuinely interdisciplinary research approaches, supporting mutual exchanges between expertise, literatures and approaches from both the arts and humanities and medical sciences
- the research quality of the partnership activities outlined, including grounding of the research agenda in the current research literature and evidence base, robust design and methods and appropriateness of intended outcomes;

### **Impact**

- whether the proposal identifies an appropriate range of potential users and beneficiaries in LMICs and/or organisations that support international development and demonstrates an appropriate strategy for exploring pathways to impact
- the potential sustainability of partnership activities and longer-term outlook beyond the funded
- period of the partnership and extent to which what is proposed will have a legacy
- the extent to which the proposal would support the development of research capabilities or support research career development of applicants, or individuals working, both in the UK and in LMICs

### **Research team and management;**

- the extent to which the proposal identifies an appropriate set of collaborations / partners for the proposed activities particularly in respect to the requirement for inclusion of appropriate collaborators with LMICs and/or organisations that support international development;
- whether the named investigators demonstrate the requisite skills to manage the proposed activities and whether there is a sufficiently broad range of expertise amongst the other named participants,
- the extent to which there are effective plans for management of the activities and the monitoring of progress, including provision of a realistic timetable and feasible resourcing

plan for achieving the aims and objectives of the proposal and plans for managing any data produced or addressing any technical requirements;

- extent to which the host RO(s) have demonstrated commitment to supporting the partnership, including for example connections to wider research or collaborative strategies or activities

**Ethics, costs and risk**

- whether proposals demonstrate that appropriate consideration has been given to ethical and/or research governance issues and wider issues relating to conducting research in the relevant LMIC cultural contexts
- the extent to which the potential outcomes justify the costs (i.e. value for money);
- the extent to project risks have been identified and measures to mitigate them put in place;

## **XI. Annex D Feedback from the First Global Public Health Partnership Call**

The Assessment Panel which considered all of the applications submitted under the first call for Global Public Health Partnership Awards highlighted a number of common issues in applications. Applicants are encouraged to consider the following common issues raised by the panel:

- A number of applications were overly ambitious and unrealistic in what they could achieve within the limits of the funding and time allowable for these partnership awards.
- A number of applications lacked strong potential for partnerships with relevant academics and organisations in the Lower and Middle Income Countries they were seeking to work in. This was evident from a clear lack of input sought from LMIC based academics, who should have been fully consulted and engaged in the development of applications.
- A number of applications lacked the relevant expertise from either the arts and humanities or the medical sciences, to address the proposed research area. This was reflected in a lack of awareness or engagement with existing work and studies in the area, which would have enhanced the applications significantly.
- A number of applications failed to fully describe and/or justify the proposed methodologies for conducting the research.
- A number of applications failed to fully consider the ethical implications of the work they were proposing.
- A number of applications failed to clearly consider or show the potential public health outcomes that could arise as a result of the proposed partnership. Whilst these were not required as an immediate output, they should have been considered as part of longer term plans.
- A number of applications failed to consider issues of sustainability and legacy and how the partnerships might be maintained or further developed in the future.
- A number of applications failed to show engagement with relevant non-academic stakeholders for example NGO's, patients and policy makers.
- A number of applications failed to show a good balance between research and impact.
- A number of applications applied at the higher end of the available funding bracket when smaller scale applications would have been more appropriate.