Going Global Partnerships

Call for Applications for RESEARCH ENVIRONMENTS GRANTS 2023-24

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS
Version 1

Countries included in this call are:

Egypt, Thailand, Turkey, and Iraq

Call opens 18 August 2023

Call closes 6 October 2023, 23:59 UK time

1. Background

The Going Global Partnerships (GGP) programme connects universities, colleges, education policy makers, civil society organisations and industry partners in the UK and around the world.

This British Council programme offers vital international opportunities - the chance to build relationships, to share ideas and good practice, to access grant funding for collaborative partnerships and more.

Through this work, the programme contributes to stronger, more inclusive, and globally connected tertiary education systems which support economic and social growth.

Research Environments Institutional Grants Project

The Research Environments (RE) project, which sits within the Enabling Research portfolio of projects under Going Global Partnerships, aims to support the research and academic environment through international collaboration; training programmes; the exchange of knowledge and best practice and the development and implementation of pilot activities to promote capacity strengthening collaboration shaped by the demands and priorities of the partner countries and the UK.

All collaborations funded will establish new research environment links, or significantly develop existing links, between research groups, departments, or institutions with the potential for longer-term sustainability. The key aim of each collaboration will be to support capacity strengthening in the partner institution in Egypt, Thailand, Turkey and Iraq, as well as to stimulate longer-term interactions between the UK and the partner country. We would encourage applicants to use this as an opportunity to engage with the commercial and not-for-profit sectors where feasible.

This call will support the research environment and enable optimal impact from research, shaped by the demands and development priorities of the partner country. We invite proposals for the establishment of RE between universities and research and innovation institutes, in partner countries and the UK.

The programme will:

- Support dialogue and knowledge exchange on academic standards, research governance and strategic research policy development to help promote an academic and research environment, between partner countries and the UK, which is more conducive to achieving maximum impact from high quality research.

- Build opportunities for the universities and institutions in the UK and partner countries to engage with the wider community and with policymakers. Enable researchers to be more responsive to development needs in their countries and enable up to date research evidence to support policy decisions. Support skills development to communicate and translate research into benefits for social welfare and economic growth. Amplify researchers' ability to conduct excellent research in areas most relevant to national priorities and fully realise its impact.

2. Overview of the funding opportunity

RE grants provide financial support for capacity strengthening and collaboration activities to develop and sustain medium- to long-term relationships proposed by applicant institutions in the UK and the partner countries. Proposals are designed by the Lead Applicant in the partner country, with the support of a UK Institution.

RE can be funded in any discipline or cross-discipline; there are no limits to the type of activities that can be delivered, as long as these respond to country needs (please see Annex 1) and meet the following criteria:

- Contribute to the country needs through structural and institutional change and correlate with overall GGP objectives. See Annex 1 for country specific themes.
- Provide the potential for future collaborations and the establishment of long-term relationships.
- Focus on capacity strengthening in areas of immediate relevance to partner countries academics, researchers and their sector.

- Have solid mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation and defined plans for sustainability.
- Each RE grant will provide a maximum of £50,000 and will support collaborative projects for up to 12 months. Awards with Iraq can be up to 18 months in duration.
- We will award up to 9 grants to successful partnerships between the UK and the partner countries specified above.
- Please note that one of the RE project grants is available specifically for Welsh institutions partnered with one of the specified countries.

3. Scope of the programme

All RE grants will have the following three overarching objectives:

- **Contribute to the development of systems, processes or structures that strengthen capacity and promote collaboration between the UK and the partner country.** The proposal must include a description of how the collaboration and capacity strengthening activities will both contribute to structural change in a particular institution and how these could be relevant at a local/regional/national level. Lead applicants should indicate how they envisage this, including a sustainability plan. For example, when the activities focus on the delivery of training, structured mentoring and cascading activities should always be included in the activity plan.

- **Establish new links or significantly develop existing links in areas relevant to the partner country and the UK.** As well as supporting the research and innovation ecosystem between the partner country and the UK, RE should also aim to stimulate longer term links between participating institutions and other potential collaborators.

- **Support international development objectives.** The capacity strengthening activities are intended to support areas relevant to the economic development and welfare of partner countries, and link to the Sustainable Development Goals[1] (SDGs).

RE activities should be designed based on market research or needs assessment (general or institutional) in the partner country. Applicants should include an explanation of the mutual benefits to the UK and the partner country. They should also explore any potential longer-term benefits that may arise. We would also encourage applicants to use this opportunity to engage with the commercial, innovation and/or other higher education and research bodies where applicable.

RE could, for example, include one or more of the following activities which could be virtual or face-to-face. This is not an exhaustive list:

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[1] For further information about the 17 SDGs, please visit: https://sdgs.un.org/goals.

- Design and delivery of collaborative training programmes for researchers, research administrators, policy makers, researchers at Research and Development companies, research Intellectual Property (IP) managers. Training can be varied from how to establish international research collaboration, publish research papers in international academic journals, develop communication or public engagement skills for researchers, consider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practices in your institution or department, manage/translate research IP and pattern management to research commercialisation and build long term industry-research interactions.

- Activities to enhance the capacity of technology transfer offices in universities, organising field trips from/to the UK to increase the accumulated knowledge and share experiences. This may include capacity strengthening activities derived through the processing of an existing piece of research so long as this aligns to the partner country aims and Official Development Assistance guidelines (please see point 4 below).

- Introducing new research methods within a particular thematic area to aid quality research output and contribute to development priorities in a partner country.

- Design and implementation of pilot initiatives seeking innovative solutions relevant to the partner country research and innovation capacity needs.

- The design and implementation of activities enabling the sharing of knowledge and good practice in areas relevant to professional development and engagement capacity strengthening.

When designing your proposal, you should ensure that plans to monitor successful outcomes and impact are embedded in the activities from the outset, and that plans for sustainability include concrete indicators and a description of the resources that will support these.[2] If your work will involve participants or beneficiaries, please plan to disaggregate any data collected to show participation rates related to gender and disability where feasible.

All RE expenditure must be detailed in the budget spreadsheet provided with the call documents. A summary of costs to be covered by the grant and justifications for expenditure must also be included in the application form. Financial reporting on grant expenditure will be required, and a reporting template will be provided for this purpose. Receipts will be required for costs greater than £250, and for all travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs.

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[2] Examples of specific indicators include: Number of people trained | Sustainability plan in place | Cascading of training planned or delivered | Wider populations reached outside of the applicant institution | Evidence of engagement with regional and/or national bodies | Proposal of how links can be sustained beyond the funding period.

Please refer to Section 6 and Annex 1 for further details on funding.

4. Relevance to economic development and social welfare [Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility]

We define capacity strengthening activities with development relevance as activities that have the potential to contribute to the economic development and social welfare of partner countries, benefitting low-income and vulnerable populations specifically.

To be eligible for funding under the programme, **all proposals must clearly articulate a plausible route to positive impact on these populations within a short- to medium-term timeframe (3-5 years). Applications which do not meet the ODA criterion cannot receive funding.**

Applicants should therefore consider, within their proposals, how the proposed capacity strengthening activities will address issues related to development effectively and efficiently, working in areas of demonstrable relevance to local challenges and using the strengths of the UK to address them. Applicants are asked to highlight relevant SDGs that the programme will support (https://sdgs.un.org/goals).

In some disciplines, development relevance can be longer-term and less direct than in other areas and impact may be harder to measure. However, in all cases, it remains the responsibility of the applicant to articulate how the activity proposed will aim to meet the ODA criteria and has the potential for lasting impact. Applicants should not expect reviewers to make assumptions about development impact that is not clearly described within the proposal.

Applicants should consult Annex 1 to review the priority themes and other specific requirements for each partner country participating in the call.

For general information about ODA, please visit the OECD website at https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/official-development-assistance.htm

Failure to demonstrate ODA eligibility will render your application ineligible regardless of other success criteria. Please make sure you consider the ODA relevance of your application.

To show development relevance within the context of the proposed project, applicants are advised to include within the application reference to any local or national consultation, links to government policies, and existing links with government institutions.

Agreements for ownership and exploitation of intellectual property generated through project activities must be consistent with the primary aim of addressing development issues in the country of the Lead Applicant.

5. Eligibility

Proposals must fulfil the following criteria to be eligible for funding under this Programme:

- Each proposal must have both

    a) one Lead Applicant from the partner country; and

    b) one Lead Applicant from the UK,

    submitting one joint application. (Please refer to specific requirements at Annex 1 for applications that are partnered with Egypt)

- Lead Applicants in the partner country and the UK must be based at one of the following Institutions:

    - A not-for-profit higher education institution with the capacity to undertake high-quality research, including their Technology Transfer Offices.
    - A Catapult Centre (in the case of the UK Principal Applicant)
    - A not-for-profit research organisation with the capacity to undertake high-quality research.

The Lead Applicant's institution in the partner country (the 'Lead Institution') must have the capacity to administer the grant and capacity must be confirmed in the support letter.

Lead Applicants can include in their proposals Associated Partners (from both the partner county and the UK) affiliated with:

- Research or higher education institutions

- Other Education Organisations/Charities/Foundations

- Not-for-profit organisations, including Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

- For-profit/commercial organisations, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

For-profit organisations are not eligible to apply as Lead Institutions. Furthermore, for-profit organisations are not eligible to receive any grant funds, except to cover travel-associated costs.

Please send an enquiry to ResearchEnvironments@BritishCouncil.org if you are in doubt about the eligibility of your organisation.

Eligibility checks will be applied to all applications after the grant call closes. Those which are not led by an eligible institution will be rejected during these checks. Please see Annex 2 for a full list of eligibility criteria. Also, please see Annex 1 for specific guidance for UK-Egypt applicants.

6. Funding

Funds will be disbursed directly to the Lead Institution (that is, the Lead Applicants' institution)

in the UK according to the approved final budget. This will apply to collaborative projects partnered with Turkey and Iraq. Applicants may be asked to adjust their budget if their request does not fit within funding guidelines or if this is considered not appropriate by the application reviewers. The Lead Institution may transfer funding to its Co-Lead institution in the partner country and/or to Associated Partners for activities which support the objectives of the collaboration and the overall Programme. The transferring UK institution will be responsible for subcontracting and due diligence to the partner institution. Private sector associate partners are only eligible to receive funds to cover travel-associated costs. Funds to be allocated for all travel, accommodation and subsistence costs can be up to 20% of the total grant per project.

In some cases, the British Council will disburse funds to the UK Institution and the national partner will disburse funding to the partner country institution. Please note this will apply for collaborative projects partnered with Egypt and Thailand. For further information on this, please see Annex 1.

RE grants are intended to contribute to the direct costs of establishing and operating your collaboration and implementing the jointly planned capacity strengthening activities (that is, costs directly related to implementing activities contained in the proposal). Please complete the budget spreadsheet as provided on the call website with details of all costs.

Please also complete the budget summary on the application form with the totals from your budget spreadsheet and a brief justification for the amounts applied for.

Category	Type	Percentage Limits	Notes
Human Resource costs	Staff costs for personnel working <u>directly</u> on the grant-funded project.	Limited to 30% of grant awarded	This includes on-costs such as superannuation and national insurance payments.
Research-related costs	Access, research, and consultancy costs directly incurred for the project. UK costs must be strictly essential, appropriate, and relevant to the design and implementation of the capacity strengthening activities.	UK based costs are limited to 20% of grant awarded	
Operational Costs	Travel (economy class), accommodation and subsistence costs.	Travel costs limited to 20% of the grant	Only covers travel to the partner country or the UK. No third country travel is allowed. Travel costs are limited to 20% of the grant,

			including economy flights, airport transfers, accommodation and subsistence costs. Accommodation and meal costs should follow the reasonable rates listed in the instructions in the budget sheet template for the grant call. Accommodation and meals costs are only for personnel working directly on the grant-funded project. All receipts for these costs must be submitted with interim and final reports. There is no minimum spend for keeping and submitting receipts for travel, accommodation and subsistence costs.
	Visa fees, vaccinations and medical insurance for travel essential to collaboration.		Only covers travel to the partner country or the UK.
	Costs of meetings, training events, seminars and conferences integral to the collaboration.		This can include short-term room hire, hire of audio-visual equipment (projectors, etc.) and stationery supplies (flip charts, etc.), reasonable levels of refreshments.
	Consumables.		Permission must be obtained from The British Council before the purchase of equipment over £1,000. Criteria are normally: 1. Equipment is essential to delivery of the project and cannot be expected to be provided by institutions. 2. Equipment will be used in the partner country and will remain there on project completion.
	Specialist software licences essential to the collaboration.		

Communication costs	Access fees to facilities or library services.	None	This includes web page development by external providers, if appropriate.

Virtual delivery costs, which may include but not limited to cost of facilitators and technicians who are recruited to manage the virtual platform, translators and/or digital tools to provide easier access for people with disabilities.

We encourage open access publishing, and publication-related costs such as author payment charges (APCs) can be included. The British Council must be notified prior to publication and reserves the right to approve APCs or other publication costs before they are incurred.

Travel costs should not be included in Communication costs |
| | Use of telecommunications such as video / audio / web conferencing. | | |
| **Other costs** | Bank charges for transfer of funds from the Lead Institution to other Partners. | | Note that for-profit organisations are only eligible to receive funds for travel associated costs. |

The British Council is committed to equal opportunities and diversity and will consider, on a case-by-case basis, requests for support for any additional travel and participation requirements in the applications, as long as sufficient justification is provided.

RE grants cannot cover:

- Direct staff costs for partners based in commercial organisations.
- Tuition Fees
- Bench Fees
- Costs related to writing up, promoting or disseminating previous research.
- Attendance at conferences or other events unless this is to present outputs and outcomes of the project.
- Patent costs
- Costs relating to the construction, procurement or rental of physical infrastructure (e.g. office buildings, laboratory facilities). It is expected that any rooms and facilities

essential for the routine operation of collaboration are provided as an in-kind contribution by the participating institutions. These can be detailed as an in-kind contribution in the budget breakdown.

- Purchase or rental of standard office equipment (except specialist equipment essential to the activity). This includes and not limited to:
    - IT hardware – laptops, personal computers, iPads, tablets, etc.
    - Office software
    - Desks, chairs, filing cabinets, photocopiers, printers, fax machines.
- Mobile phone rental or purchase, sim cards and Roaming charges
- Entertainment costs such as:
    - Gifts
    - Alcohol
    - Restaurant bills or hospitality costs for personnel not directly participating in the project.
    - Excessive restaurant costs.
- Other indirect costs not listed in the above table or detailed in Annex 1.

Please contact the ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org inbox if you are in doubt which costs can and cannot be covered.

A few key points

- The maximum duration of the proposed collaboration is 12 months. This can be up to 18 months for any projects partnered with Iraq.
- Funding, if approved, begins from signature of the Grant Agreement by the British Council. The project start and end dates are confirmed in the Grant Agreement at the time of signing the contract. The British Council Grant Agreement will be signed with the Lead Applicant in the UK, who is then wholly responsible for the financial and logistical administration of the project (including the organisation of visits to / from the UK, and the disbursement of any funds required for participating institutions). This is applicable for Turkey and Iraq projects. For projects partnered with Egypt and Thailand, the British Council, the British Council will sign the Grant Agreement with the Lead Applicant in the UK, and the national partners will sign the Grant Agreement with the country's Lead Applicant.
- Expenses incurred by the institutions prior to the effective start date, including any costs incurred in the production of the proposal, cannot be charged to the grant.
- Grant Agreements will include a requirement to fulfil a detailed monitoring and evaluation process with the British Council where all non-financial contributions would have to be supported by the relevant documentation. This framework will be the mechanism by which quality control of project implementation is achieved.

- To ensure value for money, the budget requested in your proposal (including human resource costs) should cover only costs that are essential, appropriate and relevant to

the implementation of the capacity strengthening activities. The proposal should maximise cost share through direct and indirect institutional contributions, in-kind funding, other funding sources, and private sector support.

- Please indicate in the appropriate budget spreadsheet (and summarise as indicated on the application form) funds applied for from other sources to cover the activities and collaboration; please clarify the status of the funding applications (that is, successful; decision pending). Please indicate when you will know the outcome of any pending applications.

7. Ethics

It is essential that all legal and professional codes of practice are followed in conducting work supported by this Programme. Applicants must ensure the proposed activity will be carried out to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity.

In the online application form, applicants must clearly articulate how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and how they will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the project commences and all risks are minimised.

Please refer to the Research Councils UK 'Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research' (https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-050321-PolicyGuidelinesGovernanceOfGoodResearchConduct.pdf), the Inter Academy Partnership report 'Doing Global Science: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise' (**http://www.interacademycouncil.net/24026/29429.aspx**) or contact us for further guidance.

8. Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Adults at Risk

The British Council is committed to safeguarding children and adults at risk and to upholding their rights in accordance with all applicable legislation and statutory guidance. As part of that commitment we require that all staff, and those we work with, including partners and suppliers, operate within our Safeguarding Policy which articulates our approach to protecting children and adults at risk and promoting their wellbeing. We have robust systems and procedures in place to both prevent incidents (covering, for example, the recruitment of appropriate staff, training and support given so that staff can work safely, and standards regarding the way in which we carry out activities) together with responsive actions necessary to address situations where we become aware that a child or an adult at risk may have been harmed. As part of our policy, all countries have a named Safeguarding Focal Point (SFP) who is supported by a Regional Safeguarding Manager (RSM) and the British

Council Safeguarding Team. For further information please see: https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/how-we-work/policies/safeguarding

9. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Applicants are encouraged to ensure equal opportunities in the teams implementing their proposed activity. If your project has specific requirements for full participation that cannot be met within the £50K ceiling for the grant, please contact the British Council before submission to discuss your plans.

Please contact us at ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org for more information on the British Council's approach. See our Equality Policy here:

https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/our-values/equality-diversity-inclusion

10. Gender Equality

To comply with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, applications must outline how they have taken meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities in the Gender Equality Statement section of the application form.

Gender Equality and EDI Statement

Applicants are required to consider the impact their project will have on addressing global or local gender equality. This should be about the project specifically – the outputs and outcomes; the make-up of the project team; participants, stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project; and the processes followed throughout the research programme. **It should not be a re-statement of your Institution's policy;** you may refer to the policy, but should show how it will be implemented in terms of the project. **The Gender Statement must address the below criteria**, with an understanding that, depending on the nature of the activity and innovation, not all questions will be applicable. **If a question is not applicable, you will need to explain the reasons why. Any application which states that a Gender Equality Statement is not applicable overall, will be ineligible for funding.**

Please carefully consider the following questions in regards to your project proposal, taking into account the intersectionality between gender and EDI identities.

- Have measures been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different genders to be involved throughout the project? This includes the development of the project, the participants of the research and innovation, and the beneficiaries of the research and innovation.
- The expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on women and men, and people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond.

- The impact on the relations between people of different genders and people of the same gender. For example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power, etc.
- How will any risks and unintended negative consequences on gender equality be avoided or mitigated against, and monitored?
- Are there any relevant outcomes and outputs being measured, with data disaggregated by age and gender (where disclosed) and any other relevant EDI identities?

The British Council reserves the right to reject the application if no consideration has been given to gender equality and EDI, or if the proposal is assessed to result in a negative impact for gender equality.

Please refer to the separate guidance on Gender Equality Statements that has been included with the documents for this grant call.

11.   Impact on the environment

The British Council is committed to minimising its environmental impact. For this call, we have developed a set of questions which will enable us to understand the expected impact of a proposed project on the climate (and environment more broadly). We welcome information from Principal Applicants regarding environmental considerations such as reducing carbon emissions for their projects (for example, alternatives to national or international travel such as virtual delivery), minimising waste or promoting resource efficiency.

Please note, responses to these questions will not form part of the grant assessment criteria and will not be subject to peer review. The British Council collects this information for internal purposes only. Please contact us via email (ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org), if you have any queries about the environmental impact section.

12.   Submission Process

The deadline for the submission of applications is 6 October 2023 23:59 UK time,. Applications must be submitted online at ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org. We recommend avoiding submitting applications at the last minute.
The applications must clearly identify how the proposed activities will contribute to achieving/enhancing the overall objectives of the project.

Applications must include:

- A fully completed application form, including project description, ODA compliance, environmental and EDI statements, risk assessments, and applicant information.
- A detailed breakdown of the budget requested on the spreadsheet provided. For

projects partnered with Egypt, the Egyptian Research Institution (Principal Investigator) should also provide a separate budget sheet, see Annex 1 for more guidance and template for the budget sheet.

- CVs of the academic leads on the project (max 2 pages). Egyptian Research Institutions are asked to use the specific form provided by STDF, our Egyptian funding partner, see Annex 1 for more guidance on this.
- Institutional contact details for grant and funding agreements.
- Information on how the proposed capacity strengthening activities will support the economic and social welfare of the most vulnerable populations in the partner countries where the Lead Applicant institution is based
- A detailed activity plan of activities, including timeline, milestones and division of roles and responsibilities
- A detailed plan for monitoring and evaluation
- A detailed plan for dissemination of the results and sustainability of the projects. This should include a description of the means and resources that will be used to sustain the activities beyond the duration of the grant
- Two letters of support from 1. the UK and 2. the partner country Lead Applicants' institutions in English, on headed paper, signed by the Head of Institution, Head of Department or other person with appropriate delegated authority, expressing specific commitment to the proposed project, and capability of the Lead Applicant is particularly suited to the project content, and confirming the capacity of the institution to administer the grant. **Please note that supporting letters must not be signed by the Lead Applicants**.

If you experience problems with the application process, please contact-ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org **before** the submission deadline. If you alert us to technical issues only after the deadline, we may not be able to take them into consideration when assessing the eligibility of your application.

Applicants are asked to confirm on the form that they have:

- Obtained permission to submit the proposal on behalf of the Lead Institution in the partner country and the UK institution(s). This must be confirmed by attaching Letters of Support from the respective institutions signed by the Head of institution or person with appropriate delegated authority.

- Confirmed the UK Lead Applicant's Institution's willingness to receive the funds and to sign a grant agreement with the British Council, also confirmed in the Letters of Support. Any alternative arrangements will be made clear in the call information.

- Complied with British Council policies on prevention of fraud, bribery, money laundering and addressed any other financial and reputational risk that may affect a transparent and fair grant award process.

An email confirming submission will be sent, enabling applicants to ensure their materials have been received in full. If you have not received this, please contact

ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org within five days of the deadline, or your application will be considered ineligible.

13. Applicant Screening

To comply with UK government legislation, the British Council may at any point during the application process, carry out searches of relevant third-party screening databases to ensure that neither the applicant institutions nor any of the applicants' employees, partners, directors, shareholders are listed:

- as an individual or entity with whom national or supranational bodies have decreed organisations should not have financial dealings;
- as being wanted by Interpol or any national law enforcement body in connection with crime;
- as being subject to regulatory action by a national or international enforcement body;
- as being subject to export, trade or procurement controls or (in the case of an individual) as being disqualified from being a company director; and/or
- as being a heightened risk individual or organisation, or (in the case of an individual) a politically exposed person.

If the applicant or any other party is listed in a Screening Database for any of the reasons set out above, the British Council will assess the applicant as ineligible to apply for this grant call.

The applicant must provide the British Council with all information reasonably requested by the British Council to complete the screening searches.

Please read the text to this effect on the application form and tick the box to show that you understand this.

14. Selection Process

Selection begins with an eligibility check by the British Council against the criteria given in these Guidelines and Eligibility Checklist at Annex 2. Only applications that meet the country priorities and requirements will be considered eligible.

Applications undergo a quality review, considering development needs, country priorities, sustainability and capacity strengthening potential. The quality review will involve the following steps:

- Assessment and scoring for each application will be carried out by a Panel in the UK (see Annex 1 for priority focus areas and Annex 3 for assessment form)
- **Only eligible applications relevant to the Official Development Assistance (ODA) objectives and definitions established by the OECD, and compliant to**

Gender Equality Statement requirements, will be considered for funding. All proposals must clearly articulate a plausible route to positive impact on the lives of low-income populations and a contribution to the economic development and social welfare of the partner country within a reasonable timeframe (3-5 years) [Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility as defined in Section 4]. If the proposal is deemed not to meet this essential criterion, it will be rejected for funding regardless of the quality of the proposed activities.

Proposals are quality assessed against the criteria at Annex 3, resulting in a final score between 0 and 60. Those receiving a final average score from the reviewers of less than 30 will be considered not fundable. However, achieving an average score equal to or above the threshold does not mean that the proposal will be funded.

15. Data Protection

As part of application submission, the British Council will ask applicants' permission to:

- Use the information that you are providing for the purposes of processing your application, making any awards, monitoring and review of any award.

- Share any necessary data on your application with our national partners in your country to assist with management of the application process; any decisions on grants will be made in collaboration with them.

- Use organisation details for monitoring and evaluation and statistical purposes. Gender information, where collected, is used solely in preparing statistical reports.

- Collect country of origin data for reporting and statistical purposes and to contact you within your own country.

- Contact applicants in the future to inform them about future British Council opportunities.

Under UK Data Protection law, you have the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold on you, and the right to ask us to correct any inaccuracies in that information. If you want more information about this please contact your local British Council office or the Data Protection Team at infogovernance@britishcouncil.org or see our website: http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection.

16. British Council Contractual Requirements

- The contracting authority is the British Council which includes any subsidiary companies and other organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council from time to time
  (see: www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status).

- The successful applicants will be expected to undertake activities in the UK and in the partner countries listed in these guidelines.

- The British Council is subject to the requirements of the UK Freedom of Information Act, ("FOIA"). Please indicate in your application whether FOIA also applies to your organisation, so that we can reflect this in the Grant Agreement should you be successful in your application.

- (Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement) ("Grant Agreement"). **By submitting a response to this call for applications, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of these guidelines and the Grant Agreement without further negotiation or amendment.**

- In the event that you have any concerns or queries in relation to the Grant Agreement, you should submit a clarification request to: ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org in accordance with the provisions of this call for applications by the application deadline. The British Council reserves the right not to make any changes to the Grant Agreement.

- The British Council is under no obligation to consider any clarifications / amendments to the Grant Agreement requested following the application deadline.

17. Contact Details

All queries or comments about this call should be addressed to ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org.

BRITISH COUNCIL

Annex 1 – Country-specific guidance and grant rates

Country name: Egypt
National Partner: Science, Technology and Innovation Funding Authority (STDF)

Thematic Priority Areas:

- Renewable Energy production, storage, and management
- Water treatment, resources, and management
- Health Sciences and Technologies
- Agriculture, Food Security, and Farming Technologies
- Environmental Protection and eco-system Sustainability

Additional eligibility criteria

- The Principal Investigator (PI) at the Egyptian Lead institution must be affiliated to a research entity (university, research institution/center, etc.), which has an Egyptian legal identity, and must be a Ph.D. holder.
- The Egyptian PI should read carefully and adhere to STDF general conditions and guidelines, IPR rules, code of ethics, available at (www.stdf.eg),
- The Egyptian PI and Co-PI cannot charge less than 40% of their time in the project. In addition, all Egyptian team members (including those who are not the PI or Co-PI) cannot charge more than 80% of their time to all of their submitted/pending STDF proposals and ongoing STDF-funded projects.
- Please note that among the proposed activities in the guideline, STDF will NOT support the activities that target technology transfer offices in universities and research centers.

Additional guidelines for the Egyptian Applicant budget

- Total travel expenses should not exceed 25% of the total budget on the Egyptian side.
- Salaries (not to exceed 25% of the total budget of the project for the Egyptian side and capped at EGP 600,000 of the total budget). In all cases the proposed salaries will be subjected to STDF's administrative check to ensure its consistency with the salary scale provided by STDF.

Supported activities.

The UK- Egypt collaborative projects will support the following activities:

- Design and delivery of collaborative training programmes for researchers, research administrators, policy makers, researchers at Research and Development

companies, research Intellectual Property (IP) managers. Training can be varied from how to establish international research collaboration, publish research papers in international academic journals, develop communication or public engagement skills for researchers, consider Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) practices in your institution or department, manage/translate research IP and pattern management to research commercialisation and build long term industry-research interactions.

- Introducing new research methods within a particular thematic area to aid quality research output and contribute to development priorities in a partner country.
- Design and implementation of pilot initiatives seeking innovative solutions relevant to the partner country research and innovation capacity needs.
- The design and implementation of activities enabling the sharing of knowledge and good practice in areas relevant to professional development and engagement capacity strengthening.

Duration of the grant:

Up to 12 months

Grant Amount:

Maximum £50,000 for each collaborative project between the UK and Egyptian partner.

Up to four RE collaborative projects will be funded between UK and Egypt.

Grant Payment structure:

- UK Applicant
  - 100% of the UK grant (up to £25K) will be paid on signature of the Grant Agreement to the UK lead institution.

- Egyptian Applicant
  - STDF will award the contract and make the payment to the Egyptian research institution. The budget will be disbursed as installments. The number of installments depends on the duration of the project. The first installment will be disbursed at the beginning of the project. The other installments will be paid after the receipt and approval of the progress reports.
  - The disbursement of the final installment of the project is conditioned upon the delivery of the outputs specified in the proposal in the scheduled time (such as high-impact publications, submission of articles to international journal, student theses based on the work specified in the proposal, presentations in renowned international conferences, organizing meetings...etc.) which should be highlighted in the final report. The payment of the final installment is subject to the internal rules and regulations of STDF and can cover only the indirect costs as well as the remaining incentives.

Contractual arrangements:

UK Research Institution:

Grant Agreements will be signed with the Lead Institution in the UK

Egyptian Research Institution:

When a project is approved (i.e., successfully completed all the contracting requirements by STDF), a contract agreement will be signed between STDF, the principal investigator (PI), and the Egyptian host institute.

Specific Reporting Requirements

Lead applicants should submit, together with interim and final report a financial report and supporting documents for expenditure items incurred.

Other considerations for Egyptian Applicants

- Egyptian Research Institution (PI) must submit a copy of the joint application submitted to the British Council, with other supporting documents (described below) to the Science, Technology and Innovation Funding Authority STDF portal: www.stdf.eg before the call closing date.
- The following are the required documents which the Egyptian applicant will need to upload to the STDF portal (templates will be available on STDF website and British Council website)

  - Egyptian Endorsement Letter should be submitted by PI's institution (scanned copy of the letter signed and stamped by the legal representative – President - of the PI's institution). The letter will state the project title, the name, position and affiliation of the PI in charge of the proposal, that the project idea was not funded or submitted to another funding agency (national or international), or otherwise declare, and that the institution approves the project.
  - Summary Budget for the duration of the project, with detailed annual budgets.
  - Egyptian Research Team Information Table
  - Requested Documents (to be signed, dated, and stamped by the legal representative – President - of the PI's institution).

  Please note that the joint application will not be considered eligible until these documents are successfully uploaded by the Egyptian PI to the STDF portal: http://www.stdf.eg

- The UK Lead applicant and the Egyptian lead applicant should submit the Research Environment application form (to be completed jointly) to ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org with Annex 1 to the Application form, which is the Budget sheet.
- Please note, a Research Environments grant application which is not submitted to both British Council inbox above and the STDF portal, will not be considered eligible for further assessment.
- It is necessary to submit two budget sheets: one for the UK side (using the standard British Council budget template (Annex 1 to the Application form) and one for the

Egyptian side (Annex 2 to the Application form). However, it is crucial to bear in mind that the total combined value of both budgets must not exceed £50,000. It is important to strictly adhere to this requirement to ensure compliance.

- A plagiarism check will be applied by STDF to all proposals submitted to this grant. Accordingly, the application form must be submitted in a readable PDF format (i.e. not scanned), to facilitate plagiarism checks.
- Based on the evaluation process; the Egyptian PI will be notified with STDF's final decision. The final decision will be published to the PI's account on the on Science, Technology and Innovation Funding Authority STDF portal: www.stdf.eg.

Country name: Türkiye (Turkey)
National Partner: Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey TUBITAK
Thematic Priority Areas: • Biotechnological Pharmaceuticals • Artificial Intelligence
Additional eligibility criteria • For your general inquiries related to the Research Environments Grant and the British Council, you can reach Ali Murat GUCLU: alimurat.guclu@britishcouncil.org.tr • All Turkish researchers who apply must be registered on TÜBİTAK ARBİS (Researcher Information system) through the following link: http://arbis.tubitak.gov.tr • For your inquiries related to TUBITAK, you can reach Eylem İstem ATAY: eylem.bali@tubitak.gov.tr • Applicants from Turkey must be employed at academic institutions or research/ not for-profit organisations based in Turkey as locally defined by the Council of Higher Education Turkey. • **All applications must target at least one of the priority areas of Turkey.**
Duration of the grant: Up to 12 months
Grant Amount: Maximum £50,000
Grant Payment structure: 100% of the grant will be paid on signature of the Grant Agreement with the UK institution.
Contractual arrangements: Grant Agreements will be signed with the Lead Institution in the UK.
Specific Reporting Requirements Lead applicants should submit, together with interim and final report a financial report and supporting documents for expenditure items incurred.

Other considerations

Successful projects start dates will be January 2024.

Country name: Thailand

National Partner: Programme Management Unit for Human Resources & Institutional Development, Research and Innovation (PMU-B)

Thematic Priority Area:

Research Environment Linkages for Open Access AI in Healthcare
The project aims to have Thai and UK researchers share experiences and research resources to build the research environment linkage and develop strategic research policy for **open access AI in Healthcare system**. The output may be the **structured consortium** between academic sector, healthcare sector, digital start-up sector, other relevant partners in Thailand and UK. The output may also include policy brief for strategic research policy or recommended guideline/protocol for sharing best practices and health data for open access AI in Healthcare system.

Additional eligibility criteria
Lead applicants from Thailand must be employed at academic institutions or research/ not for-profit organisations based in Thailand.

Duration of the grant:
Up to 12 months

Grant Amount:
Maximum £50,000.

Grant Payment structure:
100% of the grant will be paid on signature of the Grant Agreement with the UK institution and Thai institution. 50% of the grant will be paid to UK institution and another 50% of the grant will be paid to Thai institution.

Contractual arrangements:
The British Council will sign the Grant Agreements with the Lead Institution in the UK and will disburse 50% (up to £25K) of the total grant award to the UK Lead applicant following contract award.

PMU-B will sign the Grant Agreement with the Lead Institution in Thailand and disburse the other 50% (up to £25K) of the total grant award to the Thai Lead application following contract award.

Specific Reporting Requirements
Lead applicants should submit, together with interim and final report a financial report and supporting documents for expenditure items incurred

Other considerations
Successful projects start dates will be 1 January 2024

Annex 2 – Eligibility criteria checklist

The application has been submitted by the applicant by the published deadline.	
The application is completed in full.	
The application form and supporting documents have been completed in English.	
Principal applicants are based at: • a not-for-profit higher education institution with the capacity to undertake high-quality research • a research institution with the capacity to undertake high-quality research • a Catapult Centre (in the case of the UK Principal Applicant) • an alternative institution as detailed in Appendix 1 For the UK, if the lead institution is not an HEI, the list of eligible UK research organisations is available as a pdf with the call documents on our funding call page. If unsure, please contact: ResearchEnvironments@britishcouncil.org	
The applicants have included 2 supporting letters, one from each of the 2 Lead Institutions, on headed paper, signed by the Head of Department or other person with appropriate delegated authority, giving specific commitment to the project. Supporting letters must be in English, and not be signed by Principal Applicants. As stated in these guidelines, email versions of letters are acceptable.	
The proposed activities are relevant to country priorities and objectives of the call, as set out in Annex 1.	
Lead Applicants must have the capacity to administer a grant and satisfy British Council requirements to prevent bribery, fraud and professional misconduct.	

Applicants will confirm that they comply with British Council requirements by responding to pre-submission questions in the online application form.	
The Lead Applicants have submitted a sufficient Gender Equality Statement. They have addressed the five criteria in a meaningful and proportionate way	
Applicants have submitted a detailed budget request using the budget spreadsheet provided at Annex 1 of the Application form, with the grant call documents on our funding call page.	
Applicants have submitted a CV for both Lead Applicants.	
Where relevant, Associated Partner letters have been uploaded	
Human resource costs: Staff costs for personnel working directly on the grant funded project limited to 30% of the grant to be awarded.	
Research related costs: Limited to 20% of grant to be awarded.	
Travel costs: Limited to 20% of the grant.	

Annex 3 - Scoring system – quality assessment

Assessment of the quality and development relevance of the full proposals will be performed by expert reviewers. Only proposals that have a clearly articulated relevance to economic development and social welfare of the partner country will be considered for funding. In addition, only proposals with an average score of 30 points or more will be considered for funding.

Section 1 – Relevance to economic development and social welfare	Yes/No
The proposal clearly articulates a plausible pathway along which the activity(s) may contribute to the economic development and social welfare of the partner country and lead to positive impact on the lives of the most vulnerable populations within a reasonable timeframe (3 to 15 years)	If this section is not satisfactory, the application will not be considered.

Section 2 – Quality and relevance	Score/Range
Key Criteria: The proposed activities clearly meet country's priorities and capacity strengthening needs The proposal clearly states how the proposed activities contribute to structural change in a particular institution and could be relevant at a local/regional/national level. The benefits and relevance of the collaboration with the UK and partner country institution, and to the capacity strengthening activities, are clearly described.	*20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level* *16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level* *11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level* *6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level* *1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level* *0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.*

Section 3 – Project Proposal / Methodology	Score/Range
The description of the activity(s) includes clear, feasible and realistic objectives and outputs**.** The activities are well planned and defined. The proposal contains clear, feasible, and realist objectives, as well as potential for long term impact. Applicants clearly articulate specific outputs anticipated from the collaboration and objectives likely to be achieved The methodology has been clearly articulated and is achievable within the given timeframes**.** The proposal's aims are commensurate with the experience of the individuals involved in the project. The proposal represents value for money and all costs are fully justifiable. The timelines are realistic and there is an effective monitoring framework in place. There is a clear definition of roles and responsibilities.	*20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level* *16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level* *11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level* *6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level* *1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level* *0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.*

Section 4 – Sustainability and Capacity Strengthening	Score/Range
The proposal includes a clear and feasible description of how the Lead Institution intends to ensure the outcomes are achieved beyond the funding period. There is a clear plan for how the benefits of the activity(s) will be developed beyond the institution, whether at a local/regional/national level There is involvement of Associated Partners who will aid in sustaining the activity outcomes (if applicable) There is a planned mechanism for the dissemination of the results of the activities.	*20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level* *16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level* *11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level* *6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level* *1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level* *0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.*