

INSTITUTIONAL LINKS

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*Newton Fund Institutional Links
Applicant Guidelines
Version 1.0*

Overview of change(s) from previous version:

Change	Page in version 1.0	Page in version 2.0

The country included in this call is:

Mexico

Call opens: 18 May 2020 12:00 (midday) UK time

Call closes: 26 June 2020, 16:00 UK time

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1. Background

The Newton Fund builds research and innovation partnerships with 17 partner countries to support their economic development and social welfare, and to develop their research and innovation capacity for long term sustainable growth. It has a total UK Government investment of £735 million up until 2021, with matched resources from partner countries. The Newton Fund is managed by the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and delivered through 7 UK delivery partners, which includes UK Research and Innovation (comprising the 7 research councils and Innovate UK), the UK Academies, the British Council and the Met Office. For further information visit the Newton Fund website (www.newtonfund.ac.uk) and follow via Twitter: @NewtonFund.

Tackling global challenges – such as extreme weather conditions, urbanisation, access to affordable health care, food and energy security, and meeting the social and economic needs of a growing population – requires an integrated research and innovation approach, bringing together communities from different disciplines, sectors and countries in high-quality collaborations.

The Newton Fund Institutional Links Programme is designed to establish links beyond the level of the individual researcher and innovation practitioner, opening up opportunities for sustainable, solution-oriented research and innovation collaborations between academic groups as well as with the private and third sector.

Overview of the funding opportunity

Newton Fund Institutional Links grants provide small scale seed funding for collaborations between the UK and the participating Newton Fund countries¹ in each call to:

- Initiate new research and innovation collaborations between academic groups, departments, and institutions in partner countries and the UK
- Develop existing collaborations at group, departmental, and institutional level
- Encourage these collaborations to work with non-academic organisations and individuals to support the exchange of research and innovation expertise and the translation of research knowledge into tangible benefits
- Establish local hubs for UK--partner country activity in a particular area, enabling engagement from the wider research and innovation community.

The Institutional Links Programme is designed to be flexible and responsive to in--country needs, allowing applicants to establish collaborations on specific areas linked to country priorities and development needs, and to bring in relevant private and third sector partners, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), technology transfer offices, and other not for-profit organisations.

Grants typically range from £50,000 to £300,000 for up to two years, dependent on the country (see Appendix 1 for country specific limits).

For best fit to the local context and development needs, priority areas, specific innovation challenges and additional application requirements have been set at a country level through discussion with national stakeholders. **Please refer to Appendix 1 for country specific guidance before you prepare your proposal.** Proposals which do not follow the country specific guidance **cannot be considered for funding.**

¹ Links with particular additional countries may be possible in individual calls; please check Appendix 1

2. Scope of the programme

Grants under the Newton Fund Institutional Links programme allow partners to collaborate internationally, and gain access to new research environments, facilities, knowledge, and expertise, in order to enhance the quality of their research and enable them to translate research and innovation into economic and societal benefit.

All research and innovation collaborations funded by this programme will:

- **Establish new research and innovation links, or significantly develop existing links, between research groups, departments or institutions with the potential for longer term sustainability.** A key aim of the collaboration will be to support research and innovation capacity building in the partner institution, as well as to stimulate longer term links between the UK and partner countries for research and innovation. We encourage applicants to use this as an opportunity also to engage with the commercial and not-for-profit sectors.
- **Focus on topics or themes which have relevance to the economic development and welfare of the partner country.** Institutional Links grants are intended to support areas relevant to the economic development and social welfare of partner countries. Before preparing your proposal, please see section 4 for a definition of development relevant research and Appendix 1 for additional priority or challenge areas for individual countries.

Wherever possible, Institutional Links collaborations should demonstrate how they will benefit the wider research and innovation community in the partner country.

Collaborations may also be established as UK--partner country centres of excellence, based in the partner country, in a particular research area, acting as a resource hub for the wider research community in country and a focal point for other activities, (e.g. seminars, technical training workshops).

The country to be involved in the May 2020 call is:

Mexico

When designing your proposal, you should consider how best to involve early career researchers to promote their development and, more generally, to build researcher capacity, especially in the partner country.

Newton Fund Institutional Links grants can cover costs which support research and innovation collaboration, including: human resources costs; travel costs associated with exchange of researchers, students and staff from partners and other organisations; the costs of organising meetings, seminars and training; and other activities to establish and strengthen collaborative links. Grants can also include a limited contribution to other research related costs (including equipment, consumables and non-staff fieldwork costs); however, this is capped at 30% of the total value of the grant. As funding for the project can be disbursed via both the UK and the partner country funding agencies, in some countries there may be restrictions on partner country costs. Please refer to Appendix 1 for details.

Institutional Links grants can also support the training of technical staff, or finance other activities necessary for the translation of the research into benefit, thereby laying the foundations for longer term impact on the research and innovation landscape, and on economic development and social welfare. All expenditure must be detailed in the budget spreadsheet provided on the website at the following link:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/current-opportunities/newton-fund-institutional-links>

In addition, a summary of costs to be covered by the grant must be included in the online application form and must contain justifications, (e.g. periods of research assistant time, why consumables or equipment are needed). Interim and final financial reporting on grant expenditure, and narrative reporting using ResearchFish will be required as a condition of the grant.

3. Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility

For the purpose of Institutional Links, we define activities leading to impact with development relevance as activities that have the potential to contribute to the economic development and social welfare of low and middle-income countries^[1], benefitting low income and/or vulnerable populations in these countries.

In order to be considered for funding under Institutional Links, **all proposals must clearly demonstrate a primary focus on development and articulate a plausible route to positive impact within a short to medium term timeframe (within 10 years). Applications which do not meet this criterion cannot receive support under Institutional Links.**

In some disciplines, development relevance can be longer term and less direct than in other areas. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the applicant to articulate within the application how the proposed activities will meet these criteria.

For more on our approach to ODA, please see:

<http://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/about/what-is-oda/>

Applicants must complete the ODA compliance section of the application form and should not expect reviewers to make assumptions about development impact that is not clearly described within the proposal.

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. A strong case for your proposal must be made.

In order to show development relevance within the context of their proposed project, applicants are advised to include within their application reference to any local or national consultation, links to government policies, and existing links with government institutions and must clearly articulate the importance to relevant in-country challenges.

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

ODA transparency and reporting

As part of the government's commitment to ODA transparency and in line with DfID ODA reporting requirements, there is a requirement to publish information about 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 funded projects from this programme will be published in this way. Please

[1] As defined by the OECD DAC list of official development assistance (ODA) recipients
<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DAC%20List%20of%20ODA%20Recipients%202014%20final.pdf>

therefore write your project title and summary in such a way that they are meaningful and accessible to non-specialist audiences, following publication.

It is expected 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.

4. Gender Equality Statement

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.

Applicants are required to consider the impact their project will have on gender. 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 the policy 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 research and innovation, not all questions will be applicable. **If a question is not applicable, you will need to articulate the reasons why.**

- 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 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)?

UKRI provide useful guidance on Gender Equality Statements for their grant applications. You can find this at: <https://www.ukri.org/research/global-challenges-research-fund/gender-equality-and-international-development-research-and-innovation/>

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

5. Eligibility

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

- Each proposal must have one Principal Applicant from the UK **and** one Principal Applicant from the partner country
- Both Principal Applicants must be Leading Researchers² or Established Researchers³
- Principal Applicants must be permanent employees of one of the following (this means that Emeritus and Honorary Professors may not apply as lead):
- A not-for-profit higher education institution with the capacity to undertake high-quality- research, unless specified otherwise in Appendix 1.
- A UK higher education institution (all UK higher education institutions are eligible).
- A not-for-profit research organisation with the capacity to undertake high-quality research. See the list of eligible institutions attached with the grant call documents on the website. A Catapult Centre³ (in the case of the UK Principal Applicant).
- Both of the Principal Applicants' institutions (the 'Lead Institutions') must have the capacity to administer the grant.
- Individual departments within a single institution can make multiple applications per call provided that the proposed activities are clearly different.
- Principal Applicants may only submit one Institutional Links application per Institutional Links call.
- Principal Applicants that have received Institutional Links grants **in previous years** can submit further applications for Institutional Links provided the proposed activities are clearly distinct from, or build on, any already funded through the Newton Fund. Principal Applicants may not apply if they have already received an Institutional Links grant that year. In all cases the additionality must be clearly articulated in the application.
- Organisations affiliated to higher education institutions in the UK or any other country and based in the partner country, (e.g. an overseas campus) are not eligible for Newton Fund awarded grants.

To support the translation of research and innovation into benefit, Principal Applicants are encouraged to include in their proposals Associated Partners affiliated with:

- Other research or higher education institutions
- Technology transfer offices
- Not for-profit organisations (including NGOs)
- For-profit/commercial organisations (including SMEs)

² For an indication of profiles for the two categories, we suggest applicants refer to the European Commission document 'Towards a European framework for research careers'
https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf

³ <https://www.innovateuk.org/-/catapult-centres>

Not for-profit higher education institutions or publicly funded research organisations **are eligible** to apply as Lead Institutions.

For-profit organisations and not-for-profit organisations can participate in but are usually **not eligible** to apply for Institutional Links grants. Furthermore, **for-profit organisations are not eligible to receive any grant funds except to cover travel associated costs.**

Eligibility checks will be applied to all proposals on receipt. Proposals which are not led by a recognised not-for-profit higher education institution or a publicly funded research organisation (unless specified otherwise in Appendix 1) will be rejected during these checks. Please see Appendix 2 for a full list of eligibility criteria.

If you are unsure about your organisation's eligibility, for UK see the list of eligible institutions attached with the grant call documents of the website; for partner countries, please contact the local British Council office.

6. Funding available

The level of grant funding available from the Newton Fund depends on the country: please see Appendix 1 for country specific guidance and funding limits.

Funds will be disbursed directly to the Lead Institution(s), (i.e. the Principal Applicants' institutions) according to the approved final budget. Applicants may be asked to adjust their budget if their request does not fit within funding guidelines.

Unless stated otherwise, an advance payment of 60% of the Newton Fund grant will be made on signature of the grant agreement, followed by two payments of 20% dependent on approval of reports by the British Council. Please note that payment ratios can vary for different countries.

In some cases, the whole grant will be awarded to the UK Lead Institution, which will then disburse the funds to the Lead Institution in the partner country; in other cases, there is a separate grant agreement with each Lead Institution.

Lead Institutions may transfer funding to Associated Partners for activities which support the objectives of the collaboration and the overall Programme⁴. Any costs of Associated Partner contributions should be included in the proposed budget for the respective country. As detailed above, for-profit organisations are not eligible to receive any grant funds except to cover travel associated costs.

Please note that Appendix 1 specifies further, country specific information on eligible and ineligible costs.

Please complete the budget spreadsheet as provided on the call website with details of all costs:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/current-opportunities/newton-fund-institutional-links>

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

The following sections detail the costs that can and cannot be included in your budget request.

⁴ Note that for-profit organisations are only eligible to receive funds to cover travel-associated costs.

6.1 Eligible costs

Institutional Links grants are intended to contribute to the direct costs of establishing and operating your collaboration, (i.e. costs directly related to implementing activities contained in the proposal).

The British Council is committed to equal opportunities and diversity and will consider, on a case by case basis, requests for support to encourage under-represented groups to engage in Institutional Links activity, so long as sufficient justification is provided.

Institutional Links grants **can cover**:

Category	Type	Percentage limits	Notes
Human Resources costs	Staff costs for personnel working directly on the grant funded project: salaries and fees of temporary research and research assistant personnel, and other staff recruited to work solely on the project.	None. See country specific guidance for more details	This includes on -costs such as superannuation, and national insurance payments. Indirect costs cannot be covered and are assumed to be contributed by the principal institutions.
	A proportion of staff costs for permanently employed staff of lead institutions.	Limited to 30% of total human resources funds requested. (30% of UK HR requested grant unless specified in Appendix 1)	This includes on costs such as superannuation, and national insurance payments.

Category	Type	Percentage limits	Notes
Other research related costs	Essential research equipment for use on the project.	Other research related costs are limited to 30% of total grant requested (unless specified in Appendix 1).	<p>If the applicant requests more than 30% of the total budget requested under this category, the project will be considered ineligible.</p> <p>Permission must be obtained from British Council before the purchase of equipment over £5,000 if the application is successful. Criteria are normally:</p> <p>Equipment is essential to delivery of the project and cannot be expected to be provided by institutions</p> <p>Equipment will be used in the partner country and will remain there on project completion.</p>
	Consumables.		
	Specialist software licences essential to the collaboration.		
	Access fees to facilities or library services.		
Operational Costs	Travel (economy class) and subsistence costs to the UK and partner countries.	None See country specific guidance.	In line with British Council policies and the criteria detailed in Appendix 1.
	Visa fees, vaccinations and medical insurance for travel essential to collaboration, to the UK and partner countries.		
	Costs of meetings, training events and seminars integral to the collaboration.		<p>This can include short-term room hire, hire of audio-visual equipment (projectors, etc.) and stationery supplies (flip-charts, etc.)</p> <p>Attendance at events which are not part of the project, included in the proposal, will only be funded exceptionally, and only if the collaborators will be presenting about the project.</p>

Category	Type	Percentage limits	Notes
	Basic catering costs associated with events or meetings directly relating to the collaboration.		
Communications costs	Publication costs directly related to the collaboration.	None (see country specific guidance).	This includes web page development by external providers, if appropriate. We particularly encourage open access publishing.
	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.

6.2 Ineligible costs

Institutional Links grants **cannot cover**:

- Full economic costs (FECs).
- Institutional overheads, administration fees and other indirect costs.
- Costs of staff based in commercial or for-profit organisations.
- Costs of permanent staff in Associated Partner organisations.
- Purchase or rental of standard office equipment (except specialist equipment essential to the research). This includes:
 - IT hardware – laptops, personal computers, tablets, smart phones, Mac workstations, computer parts and peripherals, etc. Any standard hardware which would routinely be used by researchers and academics will not be funded.
 - Office software.
 - Desks, chairs, filing cabinets, photocopiers, printers, fax machines.
 - Mobile phone rental or purchase.
 - Roaming charges.
 - Tuition Fees.
 - Bench Fees (for example PhD, Masters or Undergraduate study).
 - 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.
 - Patents 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.

- Entertainment costs such as:
- Gifts.
- Alcohol.
- Restaurant bills or hospitality costs for personnel not directly participating in the project.
- Excessive restaurant costs.
- Excessive taxi fares.
- Other indirect costs not listed in the above table or detailed in Appendix 1.

Please contact UK-InstitutionalLinks@britishcouncil.org if you are in doubt which costs the Institutional Links Programme can and cannot cover.

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 collaboration. 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 collaboration; please clarify the status of the funding applications, (i.e. successful; decision pending). Please indicate when you will know the outcome of any pending applications.

For most countries, there is no minimum requirement for in-kind funding in the application, but these contributions will be looked upon favourably as a demonstration of long-lasting commitment to the programme.

7. Project duration

The maximum duration of the proposed collaboration is 24 months (**less for some participating countries – see Appendix 1**). Funding, if approved, will be transferred to the successful institution once the grant agreement is counter-signed by the British Council. Formal project start dates will be set in the grant agreement by the British Council. 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.

8. Ethics and research governance

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.

It is the absolute responsibility of the Project Leaders and the Lead Institutions to ensure that appropriate ethical approval is granted and adhered to, and that no research requiring ethical approval is initiated until it has been granted

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. Specifically, applications that involve research on animals, human participants, human tissue or patient/participant data must be accompanied by necessary permission certificates from the relevant local ethical review committees/authorities in the UK and the partner country, or an undertaking to obtain this permission in advance of the activity

commencing. Failure to do so will result in applications being rendered ineligible and any funding already committed through this Programme being rescinded.

The Lead Institution in the partner country is responsible for managing and monitoring the conduct of medical and health research in a manner consistent with the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research. There must be effective and verifiable systems in place for managing research quality, progress and the safety and well-being of patients and other research participants. These systems must promote and maintain the relevant codes of practice and all relevant statutory review, authorisation and reporting requirements. Applicants are responsible to obtain ethical approval from relevant authorities before the start of activities that require such approval. Applicant must ensure that the work carried out adheres to the local guidelines for best practice.

Please refer to the Research Councils UK 'Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct' (<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc/>), 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 at UK-InstitutionalLinks@britishcouncil.org for further guidance.

9. Diversity

British Council are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion, and to continuing to attract and nurture talented people from the widest pool to remain internationally competitive in research and innovation. We believe that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed. This includes avoidance of bias due to disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex (gender), and age.

We also recognise, and will seek to maximise, the benefits achieved by diversity of thought and experience within inclusive groups, organisations and the wider community. British Council are therefore committed to ensuring that the best potential researchers from a diverse population are attracted into research careers. Applicants are asked to consider encouraging participation from researchers from under-represented groups in the teams implementing their proposed activities.

Applicants may apply for funding to cover extra costs for such participation, for example, for disabled people who may otherwise not be able to participate, or for additional childcare. Please describe any action you are taking to encourage diversity under "Collaboration" (4th question) on your application form. Please make costs necessary to cover this inclusion clear in the 'human resources' section of the budget request within your application.

Please contact us at UK-InstitutionalLinks@britishcouncil.org for further information on funding. For more on the British Council's approach, see our Equality Policy at: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/how-we-work/policies/equality-diversity-inclusion>

10. Submission process

The deadline for submission of a completed application including all supporting documentation is **16:00 UK time on 12 June 2020**. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

The deadline applies to all parts of your application, including the uploading of fully completed supporting documentation. Any applications which are not submitted *in full* by the deadline, with all required supporting documents, will be considered *ineligible*. Appeals against this decision will not be accepted.

Applicants for all calls **must** submit a completed online application form at the following link: https://britishcouncil-cxobw.formstack.com/forms/application_form_newtonil_mexico_may2020 which includes the

uploading of supporting information. The online form allows applicants to enter information and save it for a later date until final submission. There are strict character limits for each section which cannot be exceeded.

In addition to filling in the online form, applicants are required to upload the following documents, as described, by the deadline. As above, **late submission of supporting documents, or submission of documents which do not comply with these requirements, will render the application *ineligible***. The documents are:

- Principal Applicants' CVs (up to two sides of A4 each)
- A detailed project budget (template available on the British Council call webpage)
- Letters of support from the UK and partner country Principal 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, willingness to receive funding, a description of in-kind support to be given and describing why the experience and capability of the Principal Applicant is particularly suited to the project content. Please note that supporting letters must not be signed by the Principal Applicants. **If it is not possible to provide signed letters on headed paper because of Covid-19, we can accept formal emails from Heads of Department (or equivalent) in pdf format.**
- If the proposal includes Associated Partners, a pdf file **combining together signed letters on letter headed paper from each partner containing a maximum of 300 words on the expertise they will bring to the project and the role they will take**. There is only one slot for uploading Associated Partners letter, so all supporting letters **must** be submitted as a **combined** document. Links to partner websites should be included if applicable. Letters from every Associated Partner listed in the application must be provided. **If it is not possible to provide signed letters on headed paper because of Covid-19, we can accept formal emails from Associated Partners in pdf format.**

Any other documents uploaded with your application or sent late or separately will be not be considered, unless these are specified in Appendix 1).

Applications must be in English.

This is solely to allow you to develop your responses in a convenient format. The final version of your application **must** be submitted using the online form.

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

Before the completed online application form can be submitted to the system, applicants will be asked to confirm on the form that they have:

- obtained permission to submit the proposal on behalf of the UK institution(s) **and** of the partner country institution(s). This must be confirmed by attaching Letters of Support or formal emails from the respective institutions signed by the Head of Institution, Head of Department or other person with appropriate delegated authority.
- confirmed the Principal Applicants' Institutions, (i.e. the Lead Institutions') willingness to receive the funds and to sign a grant agreement with the British Council or the national partner, also confirmed in the Letters of Support.

- 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. See: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies/anti-fraud-and-corruption>

Once the online application is submitted, the system will generate a unique application ID number. Applicants should note this number and use it in all communications with the British Council. Applicants who have not received this ID number should contact the British Council at UK-InstitutionalLinks@britishcouncil.org.

11. Applicant screening

In order 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 is 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.

12. Selection process

Selection begins with an eligibility check by the British Council against the eligibility criteria given in these Guidelines, including Appendix 1 (Country specific guidance) and the Eligibility Checklist at Appendix 2).

Eligible proposals then undergo independent external quality review on the basis of quality, fit to development needs and country priorities, capacity building potential and likely sustainability of the collaboration, as follows:

- Assessment and scoring in the UK by independent experts (see Appendix 3 for assessment form).
- Thorough review in the partner country.
- Review by a UK Review Panel of experts, which determines a UK panel score, ranks applications and makes recommendations for funding. The Review Panel considers whether proposals are of high quality (being intellectually innovative, well focused and methodologically sound), and whether the activity has the potential to have a real impact on economic development and social welfare in the partner country.

- Review of development relevance against Official Development Assistance (ODA) definitions established by the OECD and guidance developed by the Newton Fund with advice from the UK Department for International Development, see <http://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/about/what-is-oda/>. All proposals must clearly articulate a plausible route to positive impact of the research on the lives of low-income populations and to a contribution to the economic development and social welfare of the partner country within a reasonable timeframe (3–15 years). If the proposal is deemed not to meet this essential criterion, it will be rejected for UK Newton funding however high the quality of the proposed research.
- Final decision making in the partner country based on UK and partner country review and ODA scores, in collaboration with UK Newton Fund partners, in country stakeholders and national co-funding organisations.

In the UK, eligible proposals are reviewed by one of five Review Panels:

- **Biological and Medical Sciences**
- **Engineering and Physical Sciences**
- **Environment, Agriculture and Food Sciences**
- **Social Sciences**
- **Arts and Humanities.**

Please indicate in the application which Review Panel should assess the proposal and select up to three subject areas in priority order. We reserve the right to allocate your proposal to a different Review Panel.

Proposals are quality assessed against the criteria at Appendix 3, resulting in a total score between 0 and 60. Those receiving a final score from the Panel meeting 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.

Country specific priorities and challenge areas will be considered in the final decision, in addition to the general assessment criteria, see Appendix 1 for priorities by country.

Only proposals which have clearly articulated relevance to economic development and social welfare (as defined in Section 4 above) will be considered for funding.

Successful applicants will be notified approximately 5 months after the call deadline.

13. Data protection

How we use your information

The British Council will use the information that you provide for the purposes of processing your application, making any awards, monitoring and review of any grants.

We may share all application data with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the Academy of Medical Sciences, the British Academy, the Royal Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society and with our funding partners in the partner country in order to assist with management of the application process. We will share anonymised aggregated information with the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Any decisions on successful grants will be made in collaboration with them.

The British Council comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (EU GDPR). We process and handle personal information according to these regulations. The personal information that you provide on this form will only be used for the processing of your application. The information will be viewed by British Council, and those who are part of the decision-making process. Your information will not be used/shared beyond the partners listed

above for any other purpose without your specific consent. British Council reserve the right to publish and share anonymized aggregated information with stakeholders.

Organisation details, where collected, are used for monitoring and evaluation and statistical purposes. Gender information and country of origin, where collected, is used solely for statistical purposes. If we need to contact you, we will do so using the contact details you have provided.

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 inforgovernance@britishcouncil.org or see our website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection>.

14. 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 Newton Fund countries listed in section 3 of these guidelines (Scope of the Programme).
- 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.
- The British Council’s contractual approach in respect of the grant is set out at:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/current-opportunities/newton-fund-institutional-links>

- (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 UK-InstitutionalLinks@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.

15. Partnering Service

Prospective applicants to an open Newton Fund call should note that [Universities UK International](#) (UUKi) offers a partner matching service to help connect Newton Fund partner country researchers to potential UK collaborators. Applicants in Newton Fund partner countries wishing to use this service should complete UUKi’s [Partner Request Form](#), ideally as soon as possible after the launch of the call and at least four weeks ahead of the call deadline.

UUKi is then able to suggest UK researchers or research groups which have similar research interests and expertise and may therefore be interested in collaborating.

Partnership requests will also be included on Auki's [Opportunities for Collaboration webpage](#).


16. Contact details

All queries or comments about this call should be addressed to the Institutional Links email address: UK-InstitutionalLinks@britishcouncil.org.

APPENDIX 1: COUNTRY SPECIFIC- GUIDANCE

To ensure optimal fit to the local context and development needs, priority areas, specific innovation challenges and additional application requirements – such as maximum grant sizes and durations – have been set at a country level through discussion with national stakeholders.

This appendix provides country specific guidance which applicants should consider in conjunction with the main body text of this document **before** preparing their proposals. Proposals which do not take into account the country specific guidance **cannot be considered for funding**.

1.1 Mexico - Hidalgo	
Co-funder:	Hidalgo State Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (CITNOVA) 
Duration of grants:	18 Months
Size of grant:	£50,000 to £100,000 per collaboration, jointly funded by the State of Hidalgo and the Newton Fund on a 50% - 50% basis.
Thematic priority areas:	Synchrotron light source Earth Science Health Energy Biotechnology Agriculture-Food Data Science 3D & Additive Manufacturing Geotourism Information and Communication Technologies Artificial Intelligence Entrepreneurship and innovation Intellectual Property Bioeconomics
Contractual arrangements:	
The Newton Fund pays UK institution and in-country co-funder pays in-country institution.	
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mexican applicants must be based at a Higher Education Institution, Research Centre or related located in the State of Hidalgo. 2. Please refer to CITNOVA for additional eligibility criteria which include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the development of solutions for challenges specific to the State of Hidalgo. - Promote social, economic and environmental impact for the State of Hidalgo. - Consider an active participation, including monitoring activities, of CITNOVA in project implementation. - Consider the following demands in project design and implementation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Inclusion of local communities in project development. b) Dissemination of results in involved communities. c) Integration of proven technologies in project development. - Working groups must be interdisciplinary and consider the participation of at least one additional institution (public/private) located in the State of Hidalgo. 3. The proposal must consider the participation of women, gender balance is desirable. 	



Other considerations:


1. Mexican Institutions are required to include in-kind contributions for up to 50% of their total budget. In-cash contributions will be allocated by CITNOVA to selected projects.
2. Proposal must include a letter issued by CITNOVA confirming interest in supporting the project and its strategic relevance for the State of Hidalgo.
3. Successful projects' start dates will be 17 February 2021.
4. Please contact CITNOVA in case of having any further enquires: Marcela Alvarez, marcelaag@hidalgo.gob.mx

Submission process:

One UK application via British Council.

Continues below

1.2 Mexico - Mexico City	
Co-funder:	The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation of Mexico City (SECTEI).   GOBIERNO DE LA CIUDAD DE MÉXICO
Duration of grants:	12 Months
Size of grant:	£50,000 to £150,000 per collaboration, jointly funded by SECTEI and the Newton Fund on a 50% - 50% basis.
Thematic priority areas:	Health and biomedical technologies for detection, mitigation and prevention of COVID-19 Smart cities Materials design and development Urban infrastructure Biofuels Electromobility Water Disaster response Industry 4.0 Biomedical technologies Open innovation and public policy for technological innovation
Contractual arrangements:	
The Newton Fund pays UK institution and in-country co-funder pays in-country institution.	
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mexican applicants must be based at a Higher Education Institution, Research Centre or related located in Mexico City. 2. Please refer to SECTEI for additional eligibility criteria which include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the development of solutions for challenges specific to Mexico City. - Promote social, economic and environmental impact for Mexico City. - Consider the following demands in project design and implementation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> d) Inclusion of local communities in project development. e) Capacity building activities f) Dissemination of results in involved communities. g) Integration of proven technologies in project development. h) Intellectual property protection when applicable. i) Utilization of networks resources and integration to open innovation clusters. - Working groups must be interdisciplinary and consider the participation of at least one additional institution (public/private) located in Mexico City. - Development of links with commercial sector to promote supply chains and / or massification and scaling of products is desirable. 	
Other considerations:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successful projects' start dates will be 17 February 2021. 2. Please contact SECTEI in case of having any further enquires: Concepción Ávila, concepcion.avila@educacion.cdmx.gob.mx Rodrigo Díaz, rodrigo.diaz@educacion.cdmx.gob.mx 	
Submission process:	
One UK application via British Council.	

1.3 Mexico – San Luis Potosí	
Co-funder:	San Luis Potosí State Council for Science and Technology (COPOCYT) 
Duration of grants:	12 Months
Size of grant:	£50,000 to £100,000 per collaboration, jointly funded by the State of San Luis Potosí and the Newton Fund on a 50% - 50% basis.
Thematic priority areas:	Aerospace Agriculture-Food Automotive Climate Change Energy Logistics Mining Chemistry Health Tourism
Contractual arrangements:	
The Newton Fund pays UK institution and in-country co-funder pays in-country institution.	
Additional eligibility criteria:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mexican applicants must be based at a Higher Education Institution, Research Centre or related located in the State of San Luis Potosí. Please refer to COPOCYT for additional eligibility criteria which include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the development of solutions for challenges specific to the State of San Luis Potosí by integrating binational collaborations to the SLP Science, Technology and Innovation System (SICITI). Promote social, economic and environmental impact for the State of San Luis Potosí. Consider the following demands in project design and implementation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building activities. Technology Transfer. Science communication activities. Working groups must be interdisciplinary, the participation of institutions added to SICITI is desirable. Consider the participation of at least two additional institutions (public/private) located in the State of San Luis Potosí. Proposals must be aligned with the development strategy of the State of San Luis Potosí. 	
Other considerations:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mexican Institutions are required to include in-kind contributions for up to 50% of their total budget. In-cash contributions will be allocated by COPOCYT to selected projects. One project per priority area will be subject to be funded. Successful projects' start dates will be 17 February 2021. Please contact COPOCYT in case of having any further enquires: Claudia Llamas, cllamas@copocyt.gob.mx 	
Submission process:	
One UK application via British Council.	

APPENDIX 2: Eligibility criteria checklist

Eligibility criteria checklist	
The application	
The application has been submitted by the applicants by the published deadline.	
The application has been submitted by a principal applicant in the UK and a principal applicant based in one of the partner countries listed in Appendix 1.	
<p>Principal applicants are based at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Centre⁵ (in the case of the UK Principal Applicant) • an alternative institution as detailed in Appendix 1 <p>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.</p> <p>If unsure, please contact UK-InstitutionalLinks@britishcouncil.org.</p>	
The applicants have included two (2) supporting letters, one from each of the two Lead Institutions, on headed paper, signed by the Head of the Institution, Head of Department or other person with appropriate delegated authority, giving specific commitment to the project as described in Section 10 of these Guidelines. Supporting letters are not signed by the Principal Applicants.	
Applicants have submitted a detailed budget request using the appropriate budget spreadsheet provided.	
If there are associated partners, a letter from each partner has been unloaded as required within a single pdf.	
Each section of the application form has been completed in full and complies with instructions given.	
The application form and supporting documents have been completed in English.	
The principal applicants have submitted only one (1) application under this Institutional Links call.	
If either principal applicant has previously received a Newton Fund Institutional Links grant, then the proposed activity builds significantly upon the existing project.	
The budget	
The budget requested under “other research related costs” is 30% or less of the total budget requested (unless specified otherwise in Appendix 1).	
The budget requested for permanent staff costs is 30% or less of the total budget requested for human resources costs.	
If the partner country Lead Institution is affiliated in any way with a higher education or research institution in another country, (e.g. UK, USA), the proposal includes other eligible higher education or research institutions in the partner country.	

⁵ <https://www.innovateuk.org/-/catapult-centres>

APPENDIX 3: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND SCORING SYSTEM

Assessment of the quality and development relevance of the proposals will be performed by expert reviewers, and the final funding decisions will be made in discussion with British Council country office and in country partners. Only proposals that have 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 for Sections 2 to 4 are considered fundable.

Section 1: Relevance to economic development and social welfare	Score	Range
		YES/NO
<p>The proposal clearly articulates a plausible route for the research to lead to positive impact on the lives of people on low income and contribute to the economic development and social welfare of the partner country and within a reasonable timeframe (3–15 years). Please see section 4 of the guidelines for further details.</p>		

Section 2: Relevance to gender equality	Score	Range
		Sufficient/insufficient
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures are 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 project will have a positive impact on people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond. • The potential impact on the relations between people of different genders and people of the same gender is clearly described. For example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power, etc. • Risks and unintended negative consequences on gender equality will be monitored, avoided or mitigated against. • Relevant outcomes and outputs will be measured with disaggregated data by age and gender (where disclosed). 		

Section 3: Research/innovation quality and background	Score	Range
		0–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic importance and timeliness of the research/innovation topic is clearly demonstrated. • The Principal Applicants have sufficient relevant experience to undertake the proposed research collaboration and achieve the stated objectives. • The value added – to institutions and/or the wider research and innovation community – by the collaboration between the partnering institutions is clearly described. • The collaborating institutions are of appropriate academic standing. • The benefits and relevance of the research to the UK and partner country institution is clearly described. 	<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>	

Section 4: Proposal	Score	Range
		0–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The description of the proposed collaboration includes clear, feasible and realistic 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 proposal explains the benefits to both the UK and partner country researchers/innovation practitioners, institutions and end -users of the research or the products and services that will result from the project activity, in particular taking into account who might benefit and how they might benefit. • There is strong evidence of support from the applicants’ institutions and Associated Partners (where applicable). • The proposed collaboration supports new links or significantly extends and develops existing links. • If the applicants’ institutions are collaborating already, there is there clear evidence that the grant would add significant value to the collaboration. • The proposal includes a clear and feasible description of the arrangements for project managing the collaboration and communication between partners. • The proposal represents value for money; all costs are fully justified. 	<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>	

Section 5: Sustainability and capacity building	Score	Range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential in terms of professional development and capacity building for researchers, innovation practitioners and other individuals participating in the collaboration is clearly described. • The collaboration supports the institutional capacity to translate research into economic or societal benefit, for example through establishing new relationships with non-academic partners, or setting up new processes for technology transfer. • The proposal includes a clear and feasible description of how the participating institutions/organisations intend to sustain their collaboration over the longer-term. • The participating institutions demonstrate a commitment to the collaboration through provision of in-kind funding (note that matched funding is an essential requirement for proposals from a subset of countries). 		<p>0–20</p> <p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>
Total score for quality assessment (Section 3 + Section 4 + Section 5)	Score	Range
		0–60