**GLOBAL CHALLENGES RESEARCH FUND - Call for proposals**

Five UK Research Councils have announced the first joint interdisciplinary calls from the new 5-year, £1.5Bn Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), created to ensure that UK research takes a leading role in addressing the problems faced by developing countries. This funding from BBSRC, MRC, AHRC, ESRC and NERC reflects the need for all disciplines to contribute to achieve international development goals. <http://ht.ly/SzrS300ao9q>

**Amount available: up to £600,000**

**Deadline for outline applications: 4pm, 22 June 2016**

**Awards would start on 1 April 2017, for applications for proposals of ~24 months’ duration.**

**These short-to-medium term investments aim to:**

* Deploy existing UK research strengths and/ or emerging capabilities in research relevant to challenges in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs)
* Promote multidisciplinary approaches
* Encourage partnerships between UK research teams and LMICs
* Build on any existing UK-LMICs links
* Develop new or enhanced research capacity for agreeing the agriculture & food challenges of LMICs

It is envisioned that foundation award funding **will enable the building of multidisciplinary research capability** at the same time as building towards the generation of relevant new knowledge. Uses of the funding could include:

* Exploratory or pump-printing research studies for investigation of new approaches
* Developing new research collaborations or partnerships
* Extending the scope of existing research
* Creating effective pathways to impact
* Sampling or data collection
* Developing or modification of relevant research tools/ techniques
* Enhancing capability and/or capacity (eg. placements/ exchanges)

Foundation Awards are focused on early-stage work during which research questions can be defined and partnerships formed and translational approaches explored. Where proposals are founded on existing well developed research and relationships, applicants need to make it clear what is novel about the research and/or partnership.

The three initial calls aim to rapidly stimulate and enhance research and partnerships needed to pave the way for ambitious GCRF programmes. They are:

1. **Foundation Awards for Global Agriculture & Food Systems Research (£15 million fund)**

[www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/filter/gcrf-agriculture-food-systems/](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/filter/gcrf-agriculture-food-systems/)

BBSRC’s usual eligibility rules apply.

**Funding available for research challenges in five broad areas:**

1. Systems that deliver safe and nutritious food for all
2. Resilience of the food system to climatic variability
3. Reducing losses throughout the agri-food chain and reusing unavoidable food waste
4. Agriculture within the context of the wider landscape
5. Urban agriculture
6. **Global Infections (£9 million fund)**

[**www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/browse/mrc-global-challenges-research-fund-foundation-awards/**](http://www.mrc.ac.uk/funding/browse/mrc-global-challenges-research-fund-foundation-awards/)

Standard MRC eligibility criteria apply.

This call provides an opportunity for investigators to **develop new or expand existing strands of ODA applicable research and partnerships** targeting LMIC infectious disease priorities.

Funding is available for any activity with potential to rapidly advance novel global health discovery and translation research, which is not immediately ready for submission as a standard project or programme application. In many new research areas, foundation funding will need to build capability at the same time as building towards new knowledge. Systems and ‘One Health’ approaches are encouraged, comparing human and farmed livestock infections, where these add value. Areas of opportunity include, but are not limited to:

* Detection and diagnostic development
* Epidemiology/large scale data analysis/comparative studies
* Cultural, social, economic, environmental and political influences on the emergence and spread of infections
* Modelling
* Pathogen biology, including bacteriology, virology, parasitology, and fungal research
* Transmission, including environmental reservoirs, vector ecology and the behavioural and cultural environments
* Vector/host-pathogen interactions (including immune response development/protective immunity/susceptibility/immunomodulation through the life course)
* Chronic and co-infections (including immune responses through the life course)
* Co-morbidity (infection / non-communicable disease)
* Microbiome – role in resilience/susceptibility/modulating the success of therapeutic intervention
* Early stage prevention, tailored design opportunities and intervention development
* Emergence of resistance, and combatting resistance in non-bacterial infection

1. **Non-communicable Diseases (£19m fund)**

Standard MRC eligibility criteria apply.

The health needs of LMICs are evolving, and non-communicable diseases represent the new health challenge. Understanding wider and more extreme variation in diet, environment, behaviours or in early life, and a more complete understanding of human biological and cultural variability will give new insights into universal processes in human health and disease.

This call is open to supporting new research in any area of health. The priority area of particular relevance to the Cambridge Global Food Security Initiative is:

* Impacts of demographic/behavioural changes across the lifecourse (including food and nutrition, malnutrition, obesity and physical activity) and cultural factors, with a focus on maintaining health.

# IS MY PROJECT ODA COMPLIANT?

All research funded through the GCRF Foundation Awards call will be part of the UK’s Official Development Assistance (ODA).  Applications must be primarily relevant to near-term or long-term benefits to the health or prosperity of Low or Middle Income Countries. There are guidelines to ODA eligibility at:

[www.oecd.org/dac/stats/34086975.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/34086975.pdf)

[www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm)

Note that slight differences in context and detail could mean that an activity would or would not be ODA eligible. Questions you may wish to consider include:

* Is the project addressing the economic development and welfare of the country in question?
* Are the countries involved on the [DAC List of ODA Recipients](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm) (the Development Assistant Committee of the OECD)
* Is there a development need that my project or activity is addressing?
* Is this credible or is there evidence of the need?
* How would this project or activity be applied in the country?
* What would the impact of my project or activity be, and who would benefit?
* How does my project or activity contribute to sustainable development?
* Would this lead to a reduction in poverty in a developing country?
* What would success for this activity look like?
* How would success or impact be measured?

**CAMBRIGE CONTACTS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jacqueline Garget | Coordinator, Cambridge Global Food Security SRI | jg533@cam.ac.uk | 333925 |
| Mariana Fazenda | Innovation and Enterprise Officer; Cambplants Coordinator | Ml745@cam.ac.uk | 333956 |
| Kate Parsley | Research Facilitator, Bioscience Impact Team, School of Biological Sciences | Kate.parsley@admin.cam.ac.uk | 765192 |