Going Global Partnerships

**Research Capacity Building Programme in Pakistan**

Applicant Guidelines

October 2021

Going global partnership

Guidelines for Applicants

Call opens Monday, 11 October 2021  
Call closes: Sunday 10 November 2021; 23.59 BST

**Important Dates**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Sr. No. | Activities | Date/Month |
|  | **Call for proposals advertised in the UK and Pakistan** | **11 October 2021** |
|  | **Deadline for submission** | **10 November 2021** |
|  | **Evaluation of submissions completed** | **15 November 2021** |
|  | **Contract to be signed** | **December 2021** |
|  | **Project implementation starts** | **December 2021** |
|  | **Expected completion of project** | **March 2023** |

1. Background

**Pak-UK Education Gateway**

The British Council in Pakistan and Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan are working on a joint programme that aims to enhance the partnership between the higher education sectors of Pakistan and the UK. Key areas of collaboration under this umbrella framework are innovative and collaborative research, higher education leadership, quality assurance and standard-setting, distance learning, international mobility, and transnational education.

Pak-UK Education Gateway builds on existing collaborations between the UK and Pakistan that the British Council and Higher Education Commission has facilitated over the last fifteen years: from knowledge exchange and leadership development programmes to student and teacher training, scholarships, and research collaborations.

1. Rationale

High quality research and development is the key to Pakistan’s transformation into a knowledge economy. The overall goal of the programme is to increase the capacity of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to generate knowledge and promote research uptake for national development. This is in line with the Higher Education Commission’s (HEC) Strategic Plan aimed at enhancing the transformation and utilization of knowledge, research, and innovation capacity of public and private higher education institutions to conduct and sustain strategic and quality research that will contribute to the development needs of Pakistan.

These terms of reference invite proposals from organisation to run a capacity building programme for researchers and reviewers and the institutional research management of Offices of Research, Innovation, & Commercialization (ORICs).

The objectives of this assignment are as follows:

1. researchers have the capacity to develop quality research proposals for submission towards various large scale research grant opportunities at both the international and national levels.
2. reviewers have the capacity and training to deliver a rigorous, transparent, and consistent review process in line with international best practices.
3. enhancing the capacity of university ORICs in research management and commercialization support to researchers.
4. to train and support the Principal Investigators (PIs) & Co-PIs funded through the Pakistan UK Education Gateway and the HEDP research grants on: (1) research project management, to ensure they are able to achieve their proposed project milestones, and; (2) research commercialization pathways, to ensure that they are able to utilize commercialization support available through university ORICs to deliver the intended impact of their projects.
5. to benchmark the HEC research grant review process against international standards and propose a roadmap to improve the process.
6. **Outcomes**

Under this project, there will be three sets of training delivery.

Aligned activities under the **first set** of the trainings for Principal Investigators and Co-Principal Investigators for Pakistani universities will include:

* Implementation of a research capacity building programme at universities to enable researchers to write high quality, competitive research grant proposals. This will include tailored support for female researchers.
* Implement a capacity building programme for reviewers to enable them to run a rigorous, transparent, and consistent research proposal review process in line with the international best practices.

The aligned activities under the **second set** of the trainings for [Offices of Research Innovation and Commercialization (ORICs)](https://hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/ORICs/Pages/default.aspx) will include:

* Implementation of a research management training program for HEC-recognized university ORICs Managers and HEC staff to enable them to manage research grants and provide support to researchers at their institutions for successful research grant and project management.
* Certification of 75 Master Trainers among ORICs Managers/HEC staff through a thorough assessment of trainees for: (1) Research grant proposal writing; (2) Research grant review process; (3) Research grant management; (4) Research project management.

The aligned activities under the **third set** for existing research grantees of the Pak-UK Education Gateway and Higher Education Development Project research project trainings will include:

* Implementation of a research project management training programme and support activities to enable PIs and Co-PIs funded through the Pak-UK Education Gateway and the HEDP research grants to achieve their proposed project milestones to the extent required by the British Council and the HEC.
* Implementation of a training program on research commercialization pathways for the same group of researchers to ensure that they are able to utilize the commercialization support available at university ORICs to deliver intended impact of the research projects.

For all three sets of trainings the supplier will be required to include a combination of workshops, Q&A, mentorship & expert sessions as well as ensuring that content is available online with a help desk to respond to queries from the users. The workshops and other training sessions will be conducted in a blended format, with one physical location for each training program for in-person engagement with local participants and digital engagement with remote participants. The locations of the physical sessions will shift across provincial and federal capital cities with each training program.

* Institutionalization of knowledge and training materials developed during the course of the program at HEC, for the benefit of researchers and reviewers in the future. This can be done by recording all training sessions and making them available in “Do-It-Yourself” model on HEC’s Research Grant Management System or as a course on the HEC Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) platform which is under development.
* Provision of training report and complete training material/curricula for the different training programs to the British Council and the HEC, with any modifications sought by HEC and/or the Master Trainers, to institutionalize the training material for future trainings under HEC and university ORICs for the research ecosystem, as courses on the HEC Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) platform which is under development.
* Providing requisite support to HEC coordinators monitoring the quality of the training program and submitting training reports to the British Council and the Higher Education Commission.

1. Overview of the funding opportunity

Going Global Partnerships offers you vital international opportunities - a chance to build relationships, share ideas and good practices, access grant funding for collaborative partnerships, and more.

You can see current and upcoming Going Global Partnership opportunities on our website: [www.britishcouncil.org/education/he-science/going-global-partnerships/connect-collaborate](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/he-science/going-global-partnerships/connect-collaborate). We have many opportunities being launched at this time, so please check this page regularly.

This document refers to the following opportunity: **Going Global Partnerships- Research Capacity Building Programme in Pakistan.**

As given in the section above this project will include three sets of trainings for researchers and reviewers, ORICs and existing research grantees.

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

For the purpose of this call, capacity strengthening activities with development relevance are defined 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.

In order to be considered 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 (3-15 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.

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.

In order 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.

# Gender Equality Statement

Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is at the heart of the British Council’s mission. We are also required to comply with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act, 2014. Hence, applicants must demonstrate how meaningful and proportionate consideration has been taken to promote gender equality in the proposal. This must be outlined in the Gender Equality Statement (GES) section of the application form.

GES is a qualifying criterion to move the application ahead for further assessment and hence must be completed.

Applicants are required to consider the impact the proposed course will have on improving gender equality.  This should be evident in the course to be developed, specifically:

* the course outputs and outcomes
* the composition of the project team
* the profile of the participants, stakeholders, and beneficiaries of the project
* the processes followed throughout the development of the course.

Please note that It should not be a re-statement of your Institution’s gender or EDI policy. While you may refer to the policy, you must be able to demonstrate how the policy will be implemented in the proposal. The Gender Equality Statement must address the below criteria, with an understanding that, depending on the nature of the intervention, not all questions will be applicable. If a question is not applicable, you will need to articulate the reasons instead of leaving them unaddressed.

* What approach would you take to measure gender equality aspects in the outcomes and outputs of the course?
* Have measures been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different genders to be involved throughout the proposed course development? This includes authors of the course, administrators, and prospective students availing the course.

* Please articulate any expected impacts of the proposed course (benefits and losses) on people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond.

* Please articulate if the proposed course would impact relations between people of different genders in terms of changing gender norms, roles and responsibilities in households, gender roles in society, economy, politics, power, etc.
* What risks and/or negative consequences on gender equality do you anticipate? How can these be mitigated? How will you monitor this?

   The British Council reserves the right to reject the application if no consideration has been given to gender equality or if the proposal is assessed to negatively impact gender equality.

1. **Transparency and reporting**

As part of the government’s commitment to transparency and in line with British Council reporting requirements.

It is expected that the project title and summary are written in plain English and avoid the use of jargon, acronyms, puns, and play of words.

# Eligibility

Applicants must fill the application form attached with this call.

All UK organizations in the higher education sector are welcome to apply for the opportunity.

Eligibility checks will be applied to all applications on receipt.

Keeping in view the objectives and scope of this assignment, the organisation will nominate a dedicated project management and implementation team composed of, at minimum, the list of key-experts defined in the “Required Competencies” Section for effective and efficient completion of tasks defined by the British Council and the HEC.

The Higher Education Commission will provide virtual engagement platform and infrastructure at designated offices to ensure conduct of virtual training activities.

* The organisation should provide evidence of track record of delivering similar projects in the past.
* They should demonstrate in-depth knowledge of national and international legal and regulatory requirements, trends, practices and competencies in all three sets of trainings.
* The organisation shall propose a team of qualified key-experts as listed below with relevant experience. CVs of the team may be provided with the application form.
  + Key Expert 1: Team Leader
  + Key Expert 2: Research Grant Proposal Writing – Training Expert
  + Key Expert 3: Research Grants Review – Training Expert
  + Key Expert 4: Research Management – Training Expert
  + Key Expert 5: Research Commercialization & Technology Transfer – Training Expert
  + Key Expert 6: Curriculum Development Expert

# Milestones

Key Milestones and their timelines to submit your grant application for Exploratory Grant are:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Deliverables | Parameter | Timelines |
| Deliverable I | Train all the researchers funded through ICRG, GCF, LCF & TTSF on research project management and research commercialization pathways to enable them to achieve their proposed research outcomes. | January – March 2022 |
| Deliverable II | Train 250 Reviewers to deliver a rigorous, transparent, and consistent review process in line with the international best practices through a workshop-based practical mock evaluation format, through a single training program with modules tailored for GCF, LCF, & TTSF where differences exist.  Also included should be recordings of the training sessions, provided to HEC, so they may be published for researchers to self-train through a do-it-yourself model.  The following support will also have to be provided for the training/s:   * Plan workshop format * Help develop content for dissemination on social/print media * Provide Help Desk/Q&A support to training participants * Provide progress report to HEC | April – June 2022 |
| Deliverable II | Train 400 Researchers to write high quality, competitive grant proposals, including tailored support for female PIs, with separate trainings for:   * GCF, ~175 Researchers * TTSF, ~100 Researchers * LCF, ~125 Researchers | June – September 2022 |
| Deliverable III | Train all the Managers of HEC-recognized university ORICs and HEC Trainers in research grant management, and certify 75 Master Trainers from among ORICs Managers/HEC Trainers on:   * Research grant proposal writing * Research grant review process * Research grant management * Research project management | September– December 2022 |
| Deliverable IV | Benchmark the HEC research grant review process against international standards and deliver a report identifying gaps in and recommendations for the HEC R&D research grant review team and processes. | January – March 2023 |
| Deliverable VI | Final Report – On mobilized efforts for the entire program, the number of trainings held, and the number of participants who attended the trainings as well as lessons learnt/key takeaways for the next rounds. Ensure that all the recorded lessons, presentations, curricula and notes, etc. for the trainings are/have been provided to HEC. | March 2023 |
| For all Deliverables | Also included should be e-versions of the training material/curricula and recordings of the training sessions, provided to HEC, and any material/curriculum modiﬁcation sought by the Master Trainers.  The same support package as in Deliverable II shall be provided for this. |  |

# Diversity

The British Council is committed to equal opportunities and diversity in all our activities. This includes avoiding bias due to gender, disability, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or religious belief.

The applicant is encouraged to work towards as equal a gender balance as possible and promote diversity. They must ensure that no applicants are excluded from participation based on ethnicity, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation, or disability.

Please contact us for further information on the British Council’s approach, and you could also see our Equality Policy at: [www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies/equality-diversity-inclusion](http://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies/equality-diversity-inclusion).

# Application process

Applicants must submit **a completed application form provided on the website.**

The email submissions can be sent to Hajira Khan, Project Manager Higher Education and Skills at [Hajira.khan@britishcouncil.org.pk](mailto:Hajira.khan@britishcouncil.org.pk)

Once the application is received a confirmation email will be sent.

# Application assessment

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility and selection criteria.

# Selection process

Selection begins with an eligibility check by the British Council against the eligibility criteria.

Eligible applications will be further assessed against GDI (Global Development Impact) and GES (Gender Equality Statement) criteria. **All GDI / GES eligible applications will only move ahead to be further assessed by the Assessment Panel.**

TheAssessment Panel will consist of nominated, qualified individuals from the British Council and from the Higher Education Commission, Government of Pakistan.

The applications will go through a review by a panel of experts as per the Assessment criteria mentioned in Appendix 2.

Successful applicants will be notified according to timelines.

# Call deadline

The submission deadline is **23.59, UK time on 10 November 2021**. Applications submitted after the deadline **will not be considered for funding.**

# Data protection

How we use your information:

The British Council will use the information that you provide to process your application, make any awards, monitoring and review of any grants. The legal basis for processing your information is in agreement with our terms and conditions of the contract. 

We may share application data with the agency appointed by the Higher Education Commission Pakistan to assist with the management of the application process. We may share data with the agencies responsible for monitoring and evaluation as and when an agency is procured or contracted.

The British Council complies with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (GDPR). We process and handle personal information according to these regulations. The personal information that you provide on this form will only be used to process your application. The information will be viewed by the British Council staff and those who are a 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. The British Council and the Higher Education Commission reserves the right to publish and share anonymised aggregated information with the stakeholders’ organisation details, where collected, are used for monitoring and evaluation and statistical purposes. Gender information and country of origin, where collected, are used solely for statistical purposes. If we need to contact you, we will do so using the contact details you have provided under the 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:  [inforgovernance@britishcouncil.org](mailto:inforgovernance@britishcouncil.org)

 Or see our website: [www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection](http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection).

We will keep your information for a period of seven years after the project.

# 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 nor any of the applicant’s employees, partners, directors, shareholders is listed:

* 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.

# 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](https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status)
* 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.

Appendix 1: Eligibility criteria checklist

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Eligibility criteria checklist Yes/No | |
| The application has been submitted by the applicant by the published deadline. |  |
| Head of the department or equivalent authority of the participating institution has read the application and has given her/his consent on their official letterhead. |  |
| The application form is completed in full and complies with the instructions given. |  |
| The application form has Global Development Impact statements and Gender Equality Statements. |  |
| Applicant must have the capacity to administer a grant and satisfy the British Council requirements to prevent bribery, fraud and professional misconduct. |  |
| Completed Budget sheet has been added with the application |  |

All the above criteria must have a ‘Yes’ as answers, to be eligible.

Appendix 2: Selection criteria

Assessment of the quality and development relevance of the applications will be performed by a Joint Panel comprising of assessors from the British Council and the Higher Education Commission.

1. Experience of performance (30%)
2. Methodology & Approach - Project timeline availability and confirmation (30%)
3. Commercial/ budgeting/ pricing (30%)
4. Monitoring and evaluation (10%)