



PAK-UK EDUCATION GATEWAY OPPORTUNITIES

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Dear Partner,

Higher Education Commission of Pakistan Invites researchers to use the COVID-19 **RAPID Research and Innovation Initiative (RRII)**. There is an urgent and immediate need for research in order to gain a better understanding of the epidemic, to understand and contain the patterns of spread, develop diagnostics and improve patient care and the public health response.

The RRII will provide funds to selected institutions based upon a competitive, yet swift peer-review of proposals.

The call for proposal is open to Universities in United Kingdom and they can apply for the research through Pakistani University partner. The HEC will cover expenses for both UK and PK Universities.

The priority themes for RRII support include:

- **Development of Infectious Diseases Surveillance Systems using big data analytics and artificial intelligence:** Including integrating the response into the entire medical system, from primary to secondary to tertiary
- **Disease Epidemiological Modelling:** Data systems and evidence-informed modelling for disease prediction, outcome prediction and impact assessment of interventions
- **Immune Patterns of COVID-19:** Immune Mechanisms of COVID-19 infections and recovery, implications for diagnostics and therapeutics, including understanding localized factors and responses (such as ethnic, genetic, social, behavioral, and climatic factors, etc.)
- **Treatment modalities and strategies** including concentration on local and traditional medicine
- **Diagnostics kits:** Rapid diagnostics based on antigen detection via RTPCR systems, Gene EXPERT systems or alternatives
- **Indigenous manufacture of Low-cost Intensive-care equipment:** Oxygen supply and monitoring equipment, Intravenous fluid devices, Ventilators/CPAP units, Cardio-respiratory monitors etc.

- **Development of disinfectants particularly using indigenous herbal ingredients:** low-cost sterilization and sanitation material for hospitals, general-purpose consumer hand sanitization material
- **Personal Protective Equipment:** N-95 Masks, other Personal Protective Gear (clothing gowns, goggles, and gloves), preferably reusable materials
- **Information Collection and Dissemination IT platforms:** Identify hotspots and growth patterns, Contact tracing modeling of affected people
- An additional priority area for the funding instrument RAPID Innovation Seed Fund (RISF) is **Education Technology** to facilitate learning at the basic and secondary education levels in a COVID-19 environment

Each applicant seeking funding through the RAPID Research and Innovation Initiative can propose an idea based on one of the above-mentioned priority themes and can apply through one of the following three funding instruments:

- RAPID Research Grant (RRG)
- RAPID Technology Transfer Grant (RTTG)
- RAPID Innovation Seed Fund (RISF)

For further information, please visit the following link:

<https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/RnD/RRIF/Pages/default.aspx>

Note: UK Universities are eligible to apply in partnership with a Pakistani university only through the instrument of Rapid Research Grants (RRG)

Please send your queries to PAK-UKGateway@britishcouncil.org or Info-r&d@hec.gov.pk

Best Wishes,

PAK-UK Education Gateway Team