

Section A: Official Development Assistance (ODA) and GCRF strategy

The strategy

1. Summarise the key aspects of your three year **strategy for development related and GCRF research activity**, including:
 - a. Your institution's strategy and priority objectives for all development related research activity funded through all sources for three years from 2018-19.
 - b. A summary of the key aspects of your three year strategic plan for QR GCRF, in light of the criteria and objectives for the GCRF outlined in the guidance.
 - c. How activity funded through QR GCRF fits into your broader strategy and priorities for all development related research activity.
 - d. How activity funded through QR GCRF relates to the UK strategy for the GCRF.¹
 - e. How your development-related and GCRF strategies relate to your wider institutional strategy for using QR.
 - f. Likely key barriers and enablers to implementing your strategy.
 - g. The key activities by which you will realise your objectives, such as capacity and capability building; mono-disciplinary, interdisciplinary and collaborative research; generating impact from research; meeting the full economic cost of GCRF activity funded through other sources; rapid response to emergencies with an urgent research need; and pump priming.
 - h. The main developing countries, included in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list, which you intend to collaborate with.

Maximum 3,000 words

The University of Hertfordshire's Strategic Plan 2015-2020

https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/81969/uh-strategic-plan-2015-to-2020.pdf indicates that our vision is to be 'internationally renowned as the UK's leading business-facing University' and this is based on six pillars, two major ones of which being Education and Research. In relation to Research the plan specifically identifies a key strategic objective of Fostering and Strengthening Research with Global Partners and this aspect is further developed in the Strategic Programme – Research (Research Operational Plan 2015-2020).

<https://www.herts.ac.uk/research/research-management/strategy>

Although the Strategic Programme – Research does identify other items such as developing world-class leaders in education, research, business and the professions which support the University's strategy for development-related research activity, a number of research projects in the area of fostering and strengthening research with

¹ UK Strategy for the Global Challenges Research Fund,
<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/gcrf/challenges/>

global partners specifically relate to the research undertaken with developing countries included in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list.

This Strategic Programme – Research and hence the Research Operational Plan 2015-2020 is directly supported using the Quality Related (QR) funding received by the University which is allocated against specific plans to the academic schools to provide both core and pump-prime funding for the range of research activities taken forward across the Institution. The development-related and Global Challenges Research Funding (GCRF) specific activities sit within these plans which were agreed at the beginning of the Research Excellence Framework 2021 period in 2015 and are updated on an annual basis.

In addition, in the 2016-2017 academic session the University undertook a further strategic review concerned with how it could meet global challenge issues with its research as well as providing for a greater ability to assemble interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research teams. To facilitate both of the aforementioned, six Research Themes were developed and subsequently launched in May 2016. The six Themes are: Food; Global Economy; Health and Wellbeing; Heritage, Cultures and Communities; Information and Security; Space. <https://www.herts.ac.uk/research/themes>

In addition, in Autumn 2016 the University's Board of Governors agreed a 10-year development campaign focused on an initiative around undertaking research in the area of feeding the world. The 'Feed the World' campaign is a response to the fact that 2 billion people worldwide are malnourished. Furthermore, the University has undertaken to invest £10 million of its own financial resources to match what is raised during the campaign over a period of 10 years. A new Development Director was appointed to take the campaign forward and this initiative has been incorporated into the University's Strategy for development-related research. <https://www.herts.ac.uk/feed-the-world>

Although the 'Feed the World' campaign has been established for over a year and has identified in detail some fourteen research project areas which could be usefully pursued, it should be noted that it has recently obtained three donor funding awards. It is therefore anticipated that this funding stream will continue to build over the three-year period covered by this Strategy.

The six major objectives of the University's Strategy for development-related and GCRF research activity are:

- To encourage academic staff (through their personal research plans) to develop high quality collaborative research activities with countries on the DAC list that are Official Development Assistance (ODA) compliant and which lead to joint publication with international co-authors and result in beneficial research impacts for developing countries.
- To strengthen the research capacity of partner institutions in developing countries through dedicated training and skills transfer as required.
- To increase the overall number and establish new partnerships while providing appropriate matching funding to meet the full economic cost of ODA compliant projects including Newton and GCRF activities using University QR GCRF funds.
- To seek to establish long-term research partnerships to ensure the growth of sustainable research capacity in partner institutions in developing countries.

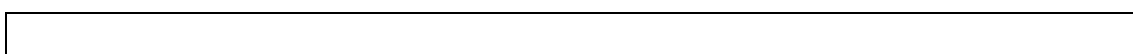
- To use University QR GCRF funds to, where appropriate, pump prime and match fund research activities in support of the University 'Feed the World' campaign which are ODA compliant.
- To operate from the academic session 2018-2019 a competitive internal grant award scheme to initiate new ODA compliant research projects each with a timescale of 2 or 3 years and to allocate QR GCRF funds to support them operating with international partners focused on priority countries identified from the DAC list.

The University already has significant international activities across the world and in a number of developing countries. Nevertheless, in relation to this Strategy the following countries are priorities for use of QR GCRF funding – Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela, Vietnam and Zambia. Prioritizing the above thirty countries, in which seven are least developed countries, therefore integrates the QR GCRF funding into the broader strategy and priorities for our development-related research activity.

The key components of the development-related and GCRF strategy are now embedded in the institutional strategy for using QR funding through the interdisciplinary research activities fostered both within and between the Research Themes. In addition, both our Newton funded research activities together with the Feed the World campaign research projects have brought together researchers from across Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Medical and Natural Sciences and Engineering to work together to forge practical solutions to address problems in developing countries. Hence, the activity funded through our QR GCRF meets objectives identified in the UK Strategy for the GCRF particularly those set out under the heading of the research agenda for enabling change. Furthermore, the focus of these activities is to undertake excellent research which is both impactful and transformative.

A key barrier to implementing the Strategy with scale is the relatively small amount of funding available within our QR GCRF allocation which will enable pump priming with limited match funding but is insufficient to provide substantial additional impetus in comparison to the efforts already in place for development-related research particularly in relation to those associated with the Feed the World campaign. Indeed, the Feed the World campaign is a major enabler to the implementation of the QR GCRF Strategy through its identification of interdisciplinary research projects and appropriate international partners, which together with funding, provide for increased impact of the research undertaken as a consequence of the Strategy.

In summary, the key activities will therefore be the carrying out of interdisciplinary research facilitated through the Research Themes with international collaborators leading to both joint publication of outcomes and also the generation of impact from the research. In this latter context, a major focus following the UK Strategy for the GCRF will be to maximise impact on the wellbeing of people in developing countries, in line with the UK aid strategy objectives while also maximising impact that arises from this research. Furthermore, the University QR GCRF funding will be allocated and utilised in the most cost-effective manner using well established monitoring and evaluation processes.



2. Provide details of the main intended **outcomes and impacts** of your strategy.

Maximum 500 words

The outcomes expected from the QR GCRF Strategy are to successfully deliver on the list of existing ODA compliant research projects that are in place from 2018-19, some of which continue until 2020-21. These deliverables will include the build up of STEM knowledge and skills for young people in DAC listed African countries as well as, for example, the determination of the distribution of seed-borne pathogens for wheat and maize in Egypt.

It is also anticipated that further new projects will be established, particularly as a consequence of the competitive internal grant award scheme to be supported by QR GCRF funds that will aid both the development of new partnerships together with the further enhancement of existing partners to grow sustainable research capacity. The demonstration of such sustainable research capacity through co-authorship of research in appropriate research journals is also an objective which will provide primary benefits to the developing country and secondary benefits to UK research.

It is clear that existing projects will also result in a range of economic impacts including skills development, new understanding of improving crop yield and the potential for both policy and guidance in relation to land tenure issues. In addition, any new projects funded through QR GCRF will be selected to maximise the range of impacts both within partner institutions and also more broadly across the appropriate developing countries.

Management of GCRF

3. How will your HEI **monitor** and **evaluate** its progress and compliance in ODA and GCRF activity, including assessing geographical distribution of activity, outputs, outcomes and economic and social impacts?

Please describe the policies, procedures and approach you have in place to measure progress, evaluate outcomes, identify lessons learned, and ensure ODA compliance.

Maximum 1,500 words

Research grant administration at the University of Hertfordshire is supported jointly between a centrally managed Research Grants team within the Research Office (pre-award) and locally by a Research Finance Manager and Finance Managers based in the Schools (post award). A Post-Award Administrator within the Research Office supports the transition between these functions.

Overall management of research projects is delegated by the University to the respective Dean of School, with responsibilities for post-award matters resting primarily with the Principal Investigator and the local Finance Manager in relation to post-award financial reporting. The Research Office is a point of advice and guidance to Principal Investigators and other staff of the University as required and will act as the central authority in relation to Principal Investigators compliance in relation to ODA and GCRF activity.

The Research Office already provides a focus for both pre- and post-award support within its Research Grants team to support the monitoring and evaluation of the University's GCRF Strategy against progress and compliance. Dedicated support within

the pre-award team will be provided to enable the Research Office to more effectively identify externally funded projects which meet ODA and GCRF compliance criteria which would benefit from match funding. All projects falling under this identification will be monitored and evaluated within the Research Office under the direction of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise).

In order to support activity that will promote the research development and economic impact in developing countries on the ODA recipients list produced by the DAC, it is also indicated in our QR GCRF Strategy that we will allocate a proportion of the QR GCRF funding to a competitive internal grant award scheme. This internal grant scheme, operational from the 2018-2019 academic session, will be administered by the central Research Office which will support the delivery of ODA compliant collaborative research with international partners from the priority countries declared in the Strategy through the facilitation of networking and joint research projects.

Projects funded by the internal award scheme will be monitored by the Research Office on an annual basis for effectiveness in relation to their strategic objectives. The evaluation criteria will take into account the need for ODA compliance, the quality of the proposed collaborative project and the fit with our institutional GCRF Strategy. All successful applicants will be required to submit an annual report documenting the outcomes and impact of their research activity/project which will form part of the institutional evaluation and monitoring of progress. The success of this monitoring process will be evaluated over the 3 year period 2018-21 to ensure its effectiveness in meeting the major objectives of the University's GCRF Strategy.

The key outcomes of projects which will be used as an evaluation tool for the purposes of this Strategy will be the development of joint publications in quality journals, the development of required skills and knowledge in partner institutions, the generation of beneficial impact within the partner developing countries in line with the GCRF Strategy, and the establishment of long-lasting sustainable international collaborations, additionally facilitated by obtaining further external funding with the partner institutions. These outcomes will be monitored via an annual reporting process which will be fed into the annual report to HEFCE on the University QR GCRF allocation.

Section B: Use of QR GCRF 2018-19 allocation and future QR GCRF priorities

4. Please complete the table in Annex A2 detailing the expected spending and activities for QR GCRF in the academic year 2018-19. Note that the total QR GCRF spending must equal the indicative allocation (available in Annex C), and all activities must be ODA-compliant for strategies to be assessed as ODA-compliant overall.

5. Please add here any explanatory notes on how you have completed the table in Annex A2 that will help inform assessment of ODA compliance.

Maximum 200 words

The table in Annex A2 has been completed incorporating existing ODA compliant research/skills development projects which primarily receive Newton funding from the

STFC and the British Council. There is also a UK/India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) grant for research in the area of land tenure and access.

The overall spend commitment from QR GCRF is £229,393, which exceeds the indicative allocation to the University of £152,278. Furthermore, this spend will drive project funding in excess of £1.1 million.

If the QR GCRF allocation remains at £152,278 then spending from the table in Annex A2 will be reduced in the following items.

- STFC Newton Fund (NARIT) Thai Radio Astronomy by £17,000.
- British Council Newton Fund by £25,115.
- UH Internal Funding Competition reduced by £35,000 through delaying the project starts.

The overall reduction will be £77,115 bringing the total QR GCRF spend down to £152,278.

The DAC nations currently supported with projects are all prioritised within the institutional QR GCRF Strategy and include both lower middle-income countries (Egypt, Ghana, India, Kenya) and upper middle-income countries (South Africa, Mauritius, Mexico, Thailand) together with several least developed countries (Madagascar, Mozambique, Zambia) where the University is already delivering projects.

6. How would your **priorities and activities** for 2018-19 QR GCRF change if the funding level differs from that outlined in indicative allocations? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Maximum 500 words

Although the six major objectives of the University Strategy for development-related and GCRF research activity would remain the same, priorities and activity would need to be altered in 2018-19 if there was a change in funding level from the indicative allocation of £152,278. In particular, an increase in funding would enable more new projects to be identified through the competitive internal grant award scheme with a focus on the priority list of countries including the seven from the least developed countries. It is predicted that this approach would have the effect of not just increasing significantly the level and range of activities but also specifically if the increased funding was sustained over the 3 year period, it would result in a new set of deliverables focused on new partnerships in a wider group of developing countries.

By contrast, a reduction in the level of funding would result in a consolidation of activity on providing full economic costing support to current projects to ensure that all the outcomes were fully delivered and that impacts are maximised. There would, however, not be resources available to extend and deepen the range and type of partnerships with other developing countries.

7. Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR GCRF activity in 2019-20? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Maximum 1,000 words

To explain the priorities for QR GCRF activity in 2019-20 then as the ongoing from 2018-19 ODA compliant projects are completed QR GCRF funding will be switched from meeting full economic cost shortfalls to supporting research activities associated with the University 'Feed the World' campaign which are ODA compliant in the DAC countries contained on the priority list. This approach would facilitate leverage of the QR GCRF as pump-prime funding to attract more extensive external funds to specific projects which otherwise could not be undertaken.

An increase in the level of QR GCRF funding would enable a more aggressive pump-priming approach to the 'Feed the World' campaign projects which are ODA compliant, and hence deliver a greater range of outcomes and impacts. In particular, there is a focus within the 'Feed the World' campaign in relation to crop protection and also aspects of land tenure which would be specific activities to be supported for DAC listed countries on the University priority list. In addition, as in 2018-19, any increase in funding would be partly assigned to the competitive internal grant award scheme to initiate new projects, again on the institutional DAC priority list.

Clearly a reduction in QR GCRF funding would result in consolidation around existing projects, together with the possibility of a very limited input to pump-priming of 'Feed the World' campaign activities.

8. Based on indicative funding allocations, what are your **priorities** for QR GCRF activity in 2020-21? Please include detail of how priorities will change with increases and decreases to QR GCRF funding, and details of how each priority meets ODA criteria.

Maximum 1,000 words

The institutional priorities for QR GCRF activity in 2020-21 will be in relation to a range of new projects that have been started either in 2018-19 or 2019-20, through both Newton and GCRF funding applications, as a consequence of the 'Feed the World' campaign or initiated and funded through the University competitive internal grant award scheme using QR GCRF funds. It is anticipated that at its current indicative level the entire GCRF funding would be expended across the aforementioned three strands of activities either providing full economic cost support, pump-priming activity to the 'Feed the World' campaign projects or to fully fund a number of competitively awarded projects with priority listed DAC countries.

An increase in the funding level would enable both further pump-priming support to newly initiated 'Feed the World' projects together with a further round of competitive awards for the internal grant scheme to increase the range of activities with a greater number of the priority DAC listed countries. If, however, there was a reduction in the indicative funding there could be no further expansion of such activities and, indeed, there would need to be a reduction albeit that it is envisaged that there would be already a commitment to fully utilise the indicative allocation. Any other approach than to plan to spend the indicative allocation would likely result in an underspend of the QR GCRF allocation

which would result in a reduction in activity overall and would not benefit the partners in developing countries or help the ODA in meeting its development objectives.

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