

## 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.<sup>1</sup>
  - 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.

#### Summary

The University of Plymouth prioritises research that makes a difference. Our strategy for the investment of QR GCRF focuses on the development and fostering of engaged partnerships between our research community, research communities in developing countries, and stakeholders and communities. Our initial focus is to concentrate on capacity building and pump priming activities as the core building blocks for longer term collaborative and impactful research that will address key challenges in developing countries that are aligned with our existing and emerging research strengths, in particular related to

- Building resilience to environmental challenges, including climate change and land use;
- Informing sustainable development policy and practice; and
- Encouraging the adoption of new technology to create opportunities for economic development and innovation.

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

Within our broad strategic framework our approach to QR GCRF is one of flexibility, providing academic colleagues with the opportunity to access funding as new initiatives develop, while ensuring that any investment is ODA compliant and delivers against the strategic objectives of GCRF. In particular, we have a commitment to ensuring genuine collaboration and partnership with researchers and communities in ODA countries to co-design programmes of research that address development challenges.

### **Strategic Context**

The University of Plymouth's refreshed Research and Innovation strategy (2017-22) has five overarching ambitions. One of these is to be 'internationally recognised for high quality research that makes a difference in economic, environmental, social and cultural terms', building on a research ecosystem that is diverse, collaborative and interdisciplinary. A key component of this is to prioritise the delivery of impactful research targeted at problems of global significance. It is anticipated that this, in part, will be achieved through supporting its staff in their quest to undertake activities focused on development related and Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) initiatives.

The University of Plymouth has an international reputation for its research in areas such as: marine, environmental and coastal science; computer science and engineering; psychology; medicine, dentistry and health sciences; heritage; and creative and cultural disciplines. Our eight research Institutes are mapped to our key strengths and reflect our engagement with interdisciplinary research. They support and encourage collaborative research of the highest quality that is targeted specifically to focus on challenges of global significance such as those associated with the GCRF agenda, and will be reflected in our development-related research plan over the next 12 months.

A key mechanism to ensure appropriate strategic focus and oversee compliant delivery is the GCRF Steering Group chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise, and established in response to the launch of the GCRF in November 2015. The remit of the Steering Group is to provide strategic oversight of GCRF opportunities and to ensure that the University has the means to respond to funding calls in the most effective and efficient manner. Membership of the Steering Group comprises staff from across the University's five Faculties many of whom have experience in undertaking ODA-compliant research projects.

The specific strategic objectives for which the Steering Group has oversight are:

- To build capacity and raise the profile of the opportunities presented by development-related research and the GCRF to the University research community, and relevant UK and overseas partners, in order to encourage and facilitate proactive engagement.
- To identify opportunities for cross-disciplinary input or external collaboration that can deliver impactful research; and
- To ensure that activities are aligned to the GCRF Challenge areas as they emerge, including through the establishment of active groups in order to capitalise on the

University of Plymouth's expertise and existing or potential collaborations to best deliver successful applications to the GCRF.

The Steering Group has taken active steps to promote GCRF engagement across the institution and to support emergent networking with DAC countries. A workshop focused on GCRF opportunities, featuring contributions from both internal and external speakers, was held in February 2017 and attended by over 100 staff from across the University. This event led to the establishment of a number of new GCRF partnerships including the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary Displacement Studies Research Network that was launched at the 2018 University of Plymouth Research Festival (<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/whats-on/human-and-urban-displacement-from-crises-to-creativity>).

The University also has a dedicated GCRF webpage (<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/support/funding/global-challenges-research-fund>) to assist staff in the exploitation of research opportunities and provides information about ongoing projects funded under the scheme in addition to publishing a Newsletter that contains details of specific funding calls and interviews with staff engaged in ongoing development-related projects. To further enhance the University's engagement with GCRF opportunities, we have used QR income to fund a one-day workshop, run by Professor Mark Reed of Fast Track Impact, that was held from 20-21 March 2018. This event focused on 'International development with lasting impact' and comprised an Open Session on ODA-compliant research for participants from across the University followed by two workshops for participants sponsored by Faculties and Research Institutes on 'Identifying stakeholders and publics' and 'Planning for impact'. A follow-up programme will be provided so that participants can apply what they have learned.

All activities funded through QR GCRF at the University will have to demonstrate compliance with ODA criteria and alignment with the strategic objectives of GCRF through the promotion of challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, and building and strengthening capacity through partnership. A fundamental principle within our Research strategy, and reflected in relation to GCRF, is that of solutions-focused programmes of work conducted across disciplines, drawing on the distinct contributions that each can make and encouraging truly original and transformative approaches to multidimensional challenges, as well as being grounded in research excellence and the delivery of genuine impact.

As an example of how these principles are translated into activity the University's Sustainable Earth Institute (SEI)

(<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/institutes/sustainable-earth>) has a central defining focus on GCRF-related research themes, many of which align with Sustainable Development Goals and other global research challenges, such as the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2015 Paris Climate Change Agreement. These strategic cross-cutting and interdisciplinary actions are people centred, and demand new inclusive, reflexive and participatory rules of engagement between physical and social scientists, policy makers, on-the-ground practitioners, and in-country specialists. In that

regard, much of the focus of the SEI over the last 18 months has been on international partnership building with:

- UNESCO, via a collaborative agreement to host a Chair in Geoscience and Society aimed at capacity-building, education and communication in geoscience;
- Major internationally-focused agencies (British Council, FCO, DFID, World Bank, ICSU)
- Global research partners (FutureEarth, the Stockholm Resilience Centre)
- Non-Governmental Organisations (e.g. Flow Partnership, BBC Media Action, World Vision, Global Network for Disaster Reduction)

Devolved QR funding to the SEI, over the last 12 months, has supported participation in global capacity-building events around GCRF-themes, including:

- British Council-funded research visits to India (Dec 2016)
- Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (22-26 May, 2017) in Cancun, Mexico.
- Understanding Risk Forum (14-18 May, 2018) in Mexico City, Mexico
- FCO-funded visit to Santiago Chile for 'Futures Congress'
- Resourcing Future Generations, Vancouver, Canada (16-20 June 2018)

In addition to these, the annual Sustainable Earth 2017 conference held on the 29 and 30 June 2017 focused on GCRF Themes and showcased cutting edge research and practitioner talks addressing the challenges faced by developing countries.

Other Institutes have also focused some of their activities on development related activities including: the Arts Institute which hosted an OPEN City workshop March 2017 (with participants from Brazil, India and Nigeria supported through the Newton fund) and is working in collaboration with UCL on an AHRC-sponsored project entitled 'Whose Right to the Smart City' (2016-2018) with network partners from India and Brazil; and the Institute of Translational and Stratified Medicine where a team of leading University of Plymouth researchers are addressing the problems of chronic lung disease in resource-poor settings such as in rural communities in Vietnam.

A further exemplar that demonstrates our commitment to turning strategic intent into delivery, is a proposal that has been funded by NERC through GCRF monies (in collaboration with the University of Exeter and Schumacher College, ) focused on 'Socio-ecological resilience to soil erosion driven by extreme climatic events: past, present and future challenges in East Africa' (<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/centre-for-research-in-environment-society/jali-ardhi>) led by Professor Will Blake. Funding for this project has led to a stakeholder workshop in Plymouth and to the formulation of a Memorandum of Understanding that will be signed in March 2018 between the University of Plymouth and Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology to support staff and student exchange. The highly successful research programme has received follow-on funding from NERC. One of the outputs from this project was a photo exhibition that took place at the University and some of the images presented formed part of an article published in the Guardian (4 May 2017) on Soil erosion in Tanzania – in pictures <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/gallery/2017/may/04/soil-erosion-in-tanzania-in-pictures>. This project has been identified by HEFCE as of particular merit and

has been trailed by RCUK in their GCRF publicity material as an exemplar of a successful ODA-compliant programme of work.

### **Relationship between development related and GCRF strategies and the wider institutional strategy for using QR**

The University has a “devolved” QR strategy, placing decisions as to its most effective and impactful utilisation within Faculties and Schools, and its allocation driven by REF performance. This flexibility promotes informed deployment of resources either for strategic planning or for new, interdisciplinary, areas of research, in alignment with the University’s overarching Research Strategy. Within this strategic and overarching framework this promotes quick responses to emerging opportunities or investment in the training of early career researchers, as well as support staff, infrastructure, equipment and facilities. The effectiveness of this in contributing to the overall Research strategy KPIs is reviewed annually as part of the planning cycle. Our approach to GCRF QR builds on this localised approach, but recognises that there are some research areas where the use of GCRF will deliver more impact. Rather than allocation by formula, therefore, the approach outlined below of responding to opportunity through competition has been adopted, within a framework that focuses on interdisciplinarity and impact.

### **Barriers and enablers to the implementation of our QR GCRF strategy.**

There are a number of barriers that need to be resolved to ensure that the University is able to deliver our goal of delivering high quality impactful research to tackle problems of global magnitude using GCRF and other appropriate funding schemes. The principle barrier is one of the resources available to the University both in terms of pre-funding costs where staff will be required to administer applications of projects that involve multiple organizations both in the UK and overseas, and the post-funding costs associated with ensuring the efficient running of projects that are supported and audit trails of spend where necessary. In recognition that GCRF applications may be particularly complex the University is developing a series of interventions. These include: staff training and mentoring; specialist support by our Research and Innovation directorate; and assistance in bid writing. The other resource element that is proving challenging to the University is in the common requirement of funding bodies that institutions who lead or act as partners will contribute up to 10% of the project costs to support the programme of work in the form of items such as infrastructure or funding for PhD students. The University can use some of its QR funding to support such initiatives but this is necessarily limited and it will have to employ methods of demand management to ensure that only a limited number of high quality projects progress to the final stage stages of some funding calls.

### **Key activities that will realise our strategic objectives**

QR GCRF funds received by the University of Plymouth over the next three years will be targeted to provide monies that can be accessed by staff, on a competitive basis, to support new and on-going ODA-compliant research, primarily through:

**Capacity and capability building** that will be used to sustainably strengthen capacity for research and innovation by supporting researchers to address challenges faced by developing countries, with an emphasis on clear demonstrable routes to improving capacity and directly and primarily promoting the welfare and economic development of developing countries. This can be through supporting the establishment or enhancement of sustainable partnerships with researchers and other organisations in developing countries, developing the capacity and capability of our researchers to undertake ODA eligible research (with a particular focus on early career stages), or increasing the engagement of University researchers with international development challenges, through activities aimed at building expertise around the challenges faced by developing countries. This approach aligns with the University's International Strategy that only seeks to develop new education partnerships where a strong opportunity for research collaboration exists.

**Pump-priming activities** to underpin GCRF and Newton bids to other funders, including relationship building. Given the finite resources at our disposal, rather than funding significant mono-disciplinary, interdisciplinary and collaborative research projects we will also focus our QR GCRF on laying the ground for future ODA activities. This will include networking meetings and other events to develop new or support existing partnerships to prepare and develop future activities and bids for funding (including travel grants), or small pump-priming projects to generate evidence and data to support future applications. These pump priming activities are not seen as ends in themselves and to be successful in securing QR GCRF will be expected to demonstrate that there is a clear outcome in terms of informing more substantive ODA compliant research that supports the welfare and economic needs of developing countries. We are aware that QR GCRF cannot be used to provide staff time or any other resources to assist in the development of bids to other funders, and this will clearly be out of scope, and monitored by R&I and the GCRF Steering committee.

QR GCRF will be distributed, through a competitive bidding process, to individuals or research groups for the sorts of priority activities outlined above although other eligible activities as outlined in the GCRF strategy such as supporting the translation of research into sustainable social and economic impact, may also be funded. It is envisaged that the majority of the funds will be distributed through two calls, held six months apart, with a maximum request for up to £50K. The travel funds would be available for distribution throughout the year with applications of up to £1.5K being considered. Distribution of the QR GCRF funds will be administered through the GCRF steering group in collaboration with the R&I directorate. Within three months of the completion of spending, recipients will be required to provide a report to account for how the funding was employed and identify measures of success. These reports will be assessed by the GCRF steering group and used to inform outcomes of future funding calls. Some of this information will be published in the GCRF Newsletter and used to promote further development related opportunities. In accord with HEFCE requirement's these monies will be required to be spent on ODA compliant activities, underpinned by research excellence, and used to

support developments with countries on the DAC list. These activities will focus particularly on supporting projects that:

- Identify specific problems and ways of addressing these
- Have a high likelihood of delivering a positive impact on economic development and welfare of the developing country within a defined time frame
- Promote strong, enduring and equitable partnerships between academic communities in the UK and overseas.

**The main developing countries, included in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list with which the University intend to collaborate**

We have not sought to be too prescriptive in relation to targeting specific developing countries, as this may constrain our ability to support new and exciting opportunities as they arise. However, the University intends to have a specific focus on those DAC countries which have academic links in areas that align with our research strengths and which have strong TNE partnerships with opportunities to expand research collaboration around areas of joint excellence. It will also focus on the exploitation of established networks, mainly generated by individual academic staff, to provide the foundation on which to build its growing GCRF portfolio.

However, it is envisaged that a proportion of the GCRF QR will support partnerships that are already in development or becoming established. For instance, over the last 18 months the University has submitted sixteen applications to GCRF/Newton calls and these have originated from 8 different Schools across all Faculties of the University. A number of these are currently under consideration as part of the ongoing GCRF research hub call. These applications have been submitted as part of networks with institutions from across the UK and have sought funding to provide links with 15 different DAC countries including: Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand and Uganda.

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

Any activity supported through GCRF QR will be expected to offer a compelling plan for how it can make, or lead to, a positive difference in developing countries. This includes identifying and reaching out to potential beneficiaries of the research and developing strategies to promote uptake of findings. It is expected that the outcomes of pump-priming activities will inform more substantive research into, and impact upon, the welfare and economic needs of developing countries.

The University will, in alignment with the research strengths within our Research Institutes, prioritise investment where there is a clear pathway to impact, and demonstrable positive outcomes in three areas:

**Creating knowledge to increase communities' resilience to environmental and human-made challenges, particularly in terms of climate change, and land use. As**

an example -, a research project that is currently funded under the auspices of GCRF by NERC is the 'Jali ardhi' project that engages in research in East Africa. Jali ardhi means 'Care for the land' and this encapsulates the focus of the study which seeks to resolve socio-ecological problems associated with soil erosion. This project applies a novel interdisciplinary approach to enhance our understanding of complex interactions between soil management, climate change and community resilience in Tanzania, and is leading to changes in land use practices on the ground and a wider impact on land use policy in developing countries.

**Providing a strong evidence base for sustainable development policy and practice**

which will help both donor and recipient governments to spend limited resources effectively and efficiently;

**Encouraging the effective use of knowledge and technology** to create opportunities for economic development, community and business engagement, commercialisation and innovation.

Two further key outcomes of our GCRF funded activities (particularly applicable to pump priming and capacity building) are:

**To promote engagement of stakeholders with the GCRF agenda**, and so develop a community of researchers that are actively involved in programmes of high quality research that will enhance the sustainable economic development and welfare of developing countries and communities. The impact of QR GCRF funding is currently shared with stakeholders using our GCRF webpages, Newsletter and other media outlets and this will be further developed by the University's marketing team. The objective of sharing this information will be to both engage the GCRF agenda with staff across the University and also to highlight opportunities for research engagement with colleagues who have complementary skills and expertise from DAC countries.

**To nurture, and promote the establishment of, enduring networks with institutions from DAC listed countries based on complementary skills and expertise**

we will focus our use of QR GCRF funding to strengthen existing networks and build new consortia where we have strong academic links based on complementary skills and expertise. The GCRF-steering group, have as part of their remit, to promote proactive engagement and will facilitate the establishment of training events to foster networking overseas that will help in the delivery of this goal.

## **Management of GCRF**

1. 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.

### **Overall monitoring, evaluation and governance of QR GCRF strategy**

The University will use its GCRF steering group, chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Enterprise, to oversee the overall implementation and monitoring of its QR GCRF strategy. The steering group will provide an annual report to the University's Research and Innovation committee (which reports directly to the University Senate) providing a summary of how the QR GCRF monies have been spent and an evaluation of the impact that these awards have had within the ODA compliance framework. Feedback from the Research and Innovation committee will help shape how the strategy evolves over its three-year time period. At the end of three years, the strategy will be reviewed and appropriate revisions incorporated into a subsequent iteration.

### **Allocation of QR GCRF funding and reporting on ODA compliance**

There will be two calls issued, six months apart during the academic year, for applications to receive project grants of up to £50K from devolved QR GCRF funds. Priority will be given to those proposals that:

- Use interdisciplinary approaches to increase resilience to environmental and human-made challenges
- Provide a strong evidence base for sustainable development policy and practice
- Encourage the effective use of knowledge and technology to address economic development and welfare in DAC-listed countries where the University has strong academic links in areas of complementary research excellence.

Applications will be subject to internal peer assessment against defined guidelines as outlined in the strategy document. Only those proposals that align cutting edge research activities with a pathway of spend that directly promotes the economic development and welfare of developing countries will be supported. Decisions will be made by the GCRF steering group. All applicants will receive feedback on the outcome of their requests for funding.

Up to 10% of the total QR GCRF monies will be set aside for rapid response requests, primarily to be used for the purposes of travel, of up to a maximum of £1.5K. The priority for these awards will be that they are used to build new, or underpin existing, consortia focused on development-related research activities. Decisions on these applications will normally be made within two weeks of receipt by a subgroup of the GCRF steering group comprising: the DVC for Research and Enterprise, the Director of Research and Innovation, and a member who is in receipt of a GCRF grant allocated by a delivery partner. All applicants will receive feedback on their submission.

All successful applications will be audited, at the end of the grant period, against ODA compliance by the University's Research and Innovation directorate and a report issued to the GCRF steering group.

### **Tracking of QR GCRF outcomes and impacts**

Applications for QR GCRF funding for project grants will be required to provide: a summary of the background to the project; a description of the work that will be undertaken; an appraisal of the anticipated outcomes; and a Gantt chart scheduling the research activities over the course of the project. All projects will be required to address a specific problem faced by one or more developing countries.

Within three months of the conclusion of the project, the principal investigator will be responsible for submitting a report detailing spend and deliverables against the original application to the GCRF steering group. An overall assessment of the success of the programme, against the list of priority research activities identified previously, will be reported back to the principal investigator and, where appropriate, shared with stakeholders using the dedicated GCRF website and/or Newsletter. Other media opportunities, such as photo-journalism, for communicating the value of QR GCRF monies to enhance research activities with developing countries will be exploited where possible.

All individuals in receipt of a travel bursary will be required to write a short report detailing how the grant has been used to support GCRF research activities. Such funds will normally be expected to provide the platform to apply for larger grants either through the QR GCRF initiative or from other delivery partners.

### **Assessment and review of QR GCRF strategy**

An overall assessment of the efficacy of the strategy will take place at the end of each academic year by the GCRF steering group. The group will not only take into account how the funds distributed have been used to support excellent research of benefit to developing countries but also the extent to which they have been successfully deployed to pump prime activities that have formed the basis of applications for GCRF grants from other delivery partners. Evidence of good practice and lessons learned will be shared across the University.

At the end of the academic year 2020-21 a full review of the QR GCRF strategy will be undertaken, in consultation with external stakeholders, and its direction of travel realigned if necessary in accord with national and global research priorities.

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

2. 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.

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

The University's strategy for GCRF QR is to build upon our current research strengths by supporting via funding, pump priming and capacity and capability building activities. Hence the focus of funding for 2018/19 is to support initiatives and projects as they develop in a flexible and repaid approach, while ensuring that any investment is ODA compliant and delivers against the strategic objectives of GCRF. Therefore the Annex A2 table reflects the mechanism for the distribution of funds rather than listing specific projects/activities. This allows the University to ensure that funded activities support the establishment of active groups that can respond rapidly to GCRF challenge areas and deliver successful grant applications with impactful outcomes.

4. 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.

The priorities and activities outline in section 1 are those that align with our institutional Research and Innovation Strategy, and our strategic use of QR through devolved prioritisation within the strategic framework. However, they also reflect the scale of GCRF QR as per our indicative allocation for 2018-19.

### **If the allocation was to increase**

While the overarching priorities would remain as outlined in our strategy, additional GCRF QR would enable us to scale up these activities, with a particular focus on pump priming rather than capacity building as this is where we see greatest value in terms of return on investment if more GCRF were to be available.

However, dependent upon the scale of any increased allocation, an increase might allow more specific investment in one or more challenge-led collaborative research projects that had been fostered through pump priming activities. Such an approach would allow a greater level of forward planning and certainty around the establishment of partnerships and networks with a clear route to secure QR GCRF research funding, rather than relying on successful applications to funders to secure the legacy of QR pump priming.

### **If the allocation was to decrease**

As above, if the allocation was to decrease, the overarching priorities would remain the same but the level of activity would need to be scaled back accordingly, so that less

funding would be available through the competitive process to support capacity building and pump priming activities.

5. 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.

Our forward strategy for GCRF QR is to build upon the pump priming and capacity building activities currently being supported, and which will be the focus of support in 2018-19, and to provide more support to initiatives and projects that arise out of these activities. This strategy will ensure that there is a legacy from capacity building and provide researchers with the confidence that there will be tangible support for high impact ODA compliant research projects. In our experience, while there is a demonstrable need for initial pump priming and capacity development, the biggest longer term challenge is securing the follow on funding that will enable partnerships supported in the development of potential research projects to realise them. This is also aligned with the GCRF national strategy in expecting that the outcomes of pump-priming activities will inform more substantive research into and impact upon the welfare and economic needs of developing countries.

Therefore, our longer strategy is to gradually scale down the support for pump priming and capacity building while increasing support for:

- Enhancing the sustainability of ODA research through meeting the full economic costs of ODA-eligible research funded through GCRF awards from funding bodies and potentially of research not funded by GCRF awards that still meets ODA and GCRF compliance criteria. This would mean making a QR contribution to project costs to support the programme of work in the form of items such as infrastructure or funding for PhD students. The indicative allocation for the University means that using GCRF QR in this manner will need to be focused on the most impactful and high quality projects. Therefore, a strategic approach to internal prioritisation will be undertaken for the allocation of GCRF QR in this way, and to ensure that only a limited number of high quality projects progress to the final stage stages of some funding calls.

- Interdisciplinary research activity and collaboration involving University of Plymouth researchers and partner organisations in developing countries, with priority given to research collaborations that have resulted from pump priming and capacity building investment in previous years, so broadening and deepening the level of ODA focused research activity at the University.

If the allocation of GCRF QR was to increase significantly then this would enable a scaling up of the activities to ensure that there is a clear pathway for investment in GCRF eligible research, with a balance between early stage capacity building and follow on funding for projects arising from such capacity building, rather than having to focus on one or the other, which would be the case if the allocation was to be decreased.

6. 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.

At the current point in time our longer term strategy will be to continue our balanced approach to creating investment pathways for GCRF / ODA focused activity, that aligns with the research strengths within the University's Research Institutes, and creates a broad framework for supporting the development of partnerships from early stage capacity building and pump priming to later stage support for multi-disciplinary and high impact research projects, focused on their sustainability.

However, the intention will be to undertake a review of the effectiveness of our strategy, to assess the extent to which it is delivering against the University's and the GCRF's aims and objectives, and the outcomes and impacts expected. This approach will allow us to ensure that the investment of GCRF QR is responsive and flexible, and focused on those areas that are delivering the greatest return on investment. This review will also take into account future allocations (whether increased or decreased) which will have a fundamental influence on the ambition of the evolving strategy.