

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

A. Your University's strategy and priority objectives for all development related research activity funded through all sources for three years from 2018-19

In its Westminster 2020 Strategy, the University identified three priority objectives that guide international development related research activities in the University:

i) **Research with impact:** The University promotes and develops innovative, cutting-edge and inter disciplinary research, which adds value through its originality, significance and rigour and its critical impacts on global society. This is endorsed by our performance in REF 2014 in which 90% of our research and 75% of our impact activity was world-leading, internationally excellent or of internationally recognised quality. There are a range of units within the University that are internationally recognised for their impact-related international development research. These include the **Centre for the Study of**

Democracy (in particular its research strand on “Post-colonial Politics, Development and Emerging Powers”),² the **Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI)**³ and the **Centre for Research and Education in Arts and the Media (CREAM)** (in particular its research strands in “Media and Development as well as “Arts and Development”);, and parts of Science and Technology (for instance, the “**Food, Nutrition and Public Health Group**”)⁴ and the **Centre for Urban Infrastructure** (with focus on cities and regions in India, China and Indonesia),⁵

ii) **Global Engagement:** The University of Westminster is ranked 29th in the world and 4th in the UK for international outlook in the Times Higher Education Young University Ranking’s 2017.⁶ We have a long history of global relationships, with partners in over 20 countries worldwide⁷. We are ensuring that our world-leading research produced in partnership with global organisations and educational institutions makes a real impact in the world. Our Global Engagement Strategy⁸ advances joint research on global issues, student and staff mobility and curriculum development in a number of developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In addition to the large developing countries including China, India, and South Africa, our student body, research expertise and engagement are also focused on smaller and lower income countries.

iii) **Research with Practice:** We are committed to promoting research which is informed by and makes a real difference in development policy and practice. Some of the exemplary practice-based research from across our faculties includes: projects on **resilient and sustainable cities** by the Faculty of Architecture and Built Environment; work on **stateless nations, resilience, humanitarian intervention and gender rights** in the Faculty of Social Sciences; work on **developing functional foods for the**

² See <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/centre-for-the-study-of-democracy>

³ See <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/camri/research-areas>

⁴ See <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/food-nutrition-and-public-health-research-group-0>

⁵ See <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/centre-for-urban-infrastructure>

⁶ Times Higher Education Young University Ranking’s 2017
https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2017/young-university-rankings#!/page/0/length/25/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats

⁷ Our global research and teaching partners are presented in this interactive map:
<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/global-westminster/global-partnerships/partner-institutions>

⁸ “Global Engagement at the University of Westminster” is available here:
<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/global-westminster/global-engagement-strategy>

extreme poor in Africa and Asia in the Faculty of Science and Technology; and the **political economy of media policy in the Global South by the Westminster School of Media and Development**. Furthermore, the Graduate School, which steers the doctoral programme is developing professional doctorates to enable research routes with professional practice-based organisations from the development community.

B. 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.

The University of Westminster has a reputation for excellence in world-leading research, which is evidence-based, informed by practice, inter-disciplinary and makes a real impact in the world. Accordingly, we have identified three focus areas for the QR GCRF:

i) **Build capacity amongst a new generation of researchers (PhD/Postdoctoral)** to contribute to research on key development problems of ODA countries, with prioritisation of lower income countries and those facing major societal challenges requiring new thinking. By opening this to researchers from developing countries, we will seek to build capacity there along with helping the UK develop its own capacity to undertake research in those areas.

ii) **Innovative and effective strategies for (a) research dissemination and uptake by undertaking research with global partners, (b) the development of research portfolios and curriculum with partner universities⁹ in developing countries and (c) forging networks with academic communities, researchers, policy makers and civil society in the global south.** Through these projects which prioritise Low Income Countries (LICs), we seek to expand the range of partners with which we work as a University. Middle Income Countries (MICs) will be included as part of the portfolio of projects but the priority will be given to LIC-related research.

iii) **Support existing and new research topics across faculties on issue areas that can potentially make transformative impacts on the sustainable development challenges of low income and middle income countries while supporting different units within the University to explore multi-disciplinary connections.** Currently different faculties across the University are undertaking development related research which broadly integrate along the following research themes linked to GCRF:
-Governance, justice and development in the Himalayan region including Nepal and Bhutan.

⁹ Evidence of our research and teaching portfolio with global partners can be found on p.4 of “Global Westminster” brochure here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/global-westminster>

- Human Rights and international response to displaced communities in Asia
- Media, democracy and development in Asia, Africa and Latin America
- Sustainable cities and communities
- Poverty reduction and equitable access to nutrition, sanitation and water
- Democracy and state building in fragile, post conflict states

C. How activity funded through QR GCRF fits into your broader strategy and priorities for all development related research activity

The activities funded through QR GCRF will support the following strategic priorities of the University for all development-related research activity:

i) **Capacity Building of Young Researchers on International Development:** The funding will sponsor doctoral and postdoctoral scholarships for students undertaking research on critical development concerns primarily, though not exclusively, of LICs. We have prioritised those topics (listed above) which align with our expertise on a number of development-related issues. This will not only add value by contributing to the knowledge base on global development but will also create a new generation of researchers with the skills to shape a democratic, civilised and inclusive society in places facing severe societal challenges.

ii) **Research with Impact:** Making a positive impact on global society and economy through excellence in research is a significant ambition for the University. We will continue to develop subject specific and interdisciplinary pathways to impact for development research. Furthermore, the Graduate School will develop the research impact skills and strategies of doctoral researchers through workshops and public engagement to ensure that research improves decision-making and benefits society both nationally and internationally.¹⁰ With GCRF funded projects prioritising LICs without ignoring pressing challenges in MICs, we aim to expand the impact of our research on the capacities of these developing countries to improve policy making and substantive societal outcomes.

iii) **Working with external stakeholders:** We will encourage programmes and projects that support research with local communities such as the Westminster Extra initiative and will focus resources on opportunities that facilitate collaboration with external stakeholders including policy think tanks, politicians, international development organisations and policy makers. We have a strong profile and reputation in relation to public engagement, retaining the polytechnic ethos at the institution in this regard. The research projects that we will host as part of GCRF will enable us to expand the scope of engagement.

¹⁰ See Graduate School Strategy 2016-2021 and Graduate School Annual Operating Plan 2017-18

D. How activity funded through QR GCRF relates to the UK strategy for the GCRF

The activities funded through QR GCRF relate to the following focus areas of the UK strategy for the GCRF:

Research Excellence: We will fund doctoral and postdoctoral research scholarships in the areas of development research where we have proven excellence. As noted in Section B, our development research across faculties coheres across the following broad themes: social justice, human rights and good governance, sustainable communities; democracy and development. Our priorities will be “Human rights, Good Governance, and Social Justice” and “Equitable access to sustainable development” as these align most clearly with our current strengths and ensure an inclusive approach across our active centres of research. Examples of our areas of excellence include: **human rights, displaced communities and democratic governance** (Faculty of Social Sciences); **sustainable and resilient cities** (Faculty of Architecture and Built Environment); **media policy of the global south** (Westminster School of Media and Development) and **functional foods and social development** (Faculty of Science and Technology). While we have proven excellence in research on and with a number of MICs including Brazil, India, China and South Africa, we intend to use the GCRF to further advance research in LICs such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal and Somalia by supporting existing and emerging research projects and networks focused on these countries.

Research Impact: The research activities will create knowledge and evidence to inform the policies and practices of donor and recipient governments and will develop innovative and effective pathways to change through research dissemination and research engagement across policy and practice spheres.

Capacity Building and Partnership: The GCRF funding will build the research capacity of a new generation of development researchers focused on LICs while also enhancing the U.K.’s own global development knowledge base. It will also enable strong and enduring partnerships between academic communities, civil society, policy makers and practitioners in the UK and the global south by working together on transformative and impactful research.

E. How your development-related and GCRF strategies relate to your wider institutional strategy for using QR

QR funding supports the following priority areas:

- i. Research Excellence: The largest proportion of QR funding is allocated to faculties to pursue research according to local strategies and strengths. All faculties support elements of globally engaged research with their QR.

ii. Doctoral Research with Global Engagement: QR funds reserved for University level activities and initiatives support the development of the next generation of researchers through allocations to the Graduate School and through institutional research studentship programmes.

iii. Research with Impact: University-level QR funds are also allocated for institutional Strategic Research Funds, which through internal competitions and other devices support projects in key strategic areas e.g. international research, impact. The funds are matched 1:1 by a Quintin Hogg Trust grant.

F. Likely key barriers and enablers to implementing your strategy

The key enablers to implementing the strategy are as follows:

1. Proven excellence in selected areas of development related research with potential for further development of cross-faculty collaboration on a number of topics.
2. Internationally diverse student body with several international students benefitting from scholarships at all levels at the University every year.
3. A Graduate School that operates across the institution and is dedicated to supporting and developing our doctoral students. This includes a comprehensive Doctoral Researcher Development Programme (DRDP), which is based on Vitae's Researcher Development Framework and is delivered across all student cohorts. Concerning student progression and related quality assurance, The Graduate School operates a well-established Annual Programme Review (APR) scheme, to track student progression periodically and to ensure that our institutional KPI for student completion rates is met.
4. Investments for Research Impact and Global Engagement made through a number of initiatives led by the Graduate School including, but not restricted to: workshops, annual conferences and professional doctorates.

The key disablers to implementing the strategy are as follows:

The implementation of the strategy will require coordination across different units of the university with consequent challenges for communication and effective administration. Additionally, our prioritisation for the GCRF strategy on LICs is a shift in emphasis away from a more traditional focus on MICs where we have established research and institutional links with countries such as China and India. We are well-equipped to deal with these challenges, however. The Graduate School has substantial experience of managing cross-disciplinary and cross-faculty projects in the context of doctoral research. Equally, we have existing strengths and extensive expertise in International Development within the lead academic unit (the Centre for the Study of Democracy), where we already have specialists working on LICs and managing interdisciplinary research projects. Thus, we are confident we will effectively manage the challenges that the strategy generates.

A reduction of funding in the year 2 or 3 would pose a challenge in that we are committed to funding the cohort for three years. However, we have addressed this by a two-pronged approach: firstly, the University has committed to meeting any shortfall thus arising and secondly we have built 20k per annum flexibility into the budget (which will otherwise be used to support enhanced development activities for the students such as conference attendance and travel grants etc.

G. The key activities by which you will realise your objectives

- i. Studentships for 4-5 doctoral students and one postdoctoral fellow to promote a new generation of researchers.
- ii. Support for existing initiatives of the Graduate School on Global Engagement such as the Globally Engaged Scholarship Scheme.
- iii. Extend existing successful activities and new priority activities of the Graduate School for demonstrating impact of research. These include the Annual Reception for doctoral researchers, Graduate School Annual lecture and new areas such as professional doctorates and research routes with external stakeholders from the development community.
- iv. Facilitate interdisciplinary and cross faculty research through funding for pilot projects matched with Quintin Hogg Trust funding.
- v. With the Graduate School as the hub and CSD as the academic lead, sustain a community of researchers with expertise in global challenges and international development.

H. The main developing countries included in the DAC list, which you intend to collaborate with

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal (LICs)
India, Indonesia, South Africa (MICs)
(The list of countries is not exclusive)

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

Maximum 500 words

The doctoral research community is an integral part of the University: the education of the next generation of researchers is a critical aspect of what defines us as a higher education institution; and the innovative theoretical and practice-based research produced by our doctoral student body adds significantly to our contribution to the global knowledge economy. We expect the GCRF funding to strengthen all of the following:

- i. **Capacity Building of Doctoral Researchers** – the primary outcome will be a new generation of researchers with the capacity to undertake research on LICs along with MICs on major societal challenges with focus on equitable access to development,

sustainable economies and societies, and human rights, good governance and social justice.

ii. **Global Engagement** – outcomes will include new partnerships and networks with organisations in and focused on development challenges in LICs along with consolidation of networks with MICs.

iii. **Research with Impact** – research projects and networks designed to enhance impact on policy making and societal outcomes in LICs

iv. **Strengthening cross-disciplinary research on International Development** under the stewardship of the Graduate School and academic leadership of the Centre for the Study of Democracy

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

Monitoring Outcomes and Impact:

The expected outcomes listed above, will be monitored and evaluated through existing procedures of the Graduate School. They are as follows:

i. Capacity Building of Doctoral Researchers: This will be executed and monitored through the Doctoral Research Development Programme (DRDP)¹¹. In addition, the Virtual Research Environment will continue to enable efficient and transparent monitoring of doctoral project management and progression across all cohorts.

ii. Global Engagement: While the large majority of our graduates are and will continue to be globally engaged directly through their research projects, the Graduate School will support this systematically by providing funding for international conferences and pursuing collaborative partnerships in coordination with the University's Global Engagement working group.

¹¹ The Doctoral Research Development Programme can be found here:

<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/drpd/programme-structure>

iii. Research with Impact: Doctoral projects across our disciplines are a rich source for generating research impact and the Graduate School will seek to enhance and exploit this potential by: prioritising topic areas with promising impact potential; conducting workshops on public engagement and impact creation; supporting projects that have a link to professional practice and entail collaboration with non-academic partners and audiences; providing a forum for cross-disciplinary research engagement to inform and address social, economic and cultural issues in developing countries.

The Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD) will also play a key role as the lead academic unit for this programme of activity. It will sustain the interdisciplinary network of researchers and postgraduates working on different aspects of international development, bringing them together for workshops, planning sessions and relevant training. A steering committee made up of 2 academics from CSD, the head of the Graduate School and up to one academics from other participating Faculties undertaking development research at the University will meet monthly over university's term time to review new proposals, and monitor the implementation of the QR GCRF outcomes.

The work of the postdoctoral fellow will be overseen by a subject specialist, along with mentoring from the research director of CSD. There is an established and effective pattern of mentorship within CSD, particularly focused on the specific needs of ECRs.

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

We have provided the costing for four PhD studentships (based on overseas fee and yearly maintenance), one Postdoctoral Fellowship (based on the salary cost for an early career Research Associate), three workshops (training workshop in year one, impact workshop in year two, and an international conference in year three involving beneficiaries along with other researchers and external stakeholders). If one or two successful candidates for studentships are eligible for UK/EU fee rate, it is possible for us to convert the total number of studentships into five. Allowing us this flexibility will maximise our impact and help expand GCRF's activities.

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

Scenarios for increase in GCRF funding: If our funding increases significantly, we would invest in additional postdoctoral fellowships to support much needed Early Career Research career pathways and to further strengthen and build our profile of excellence in International Development. We would also invest in initiatives that provide funding for fieldwork and impact activities in LICs. If the funding increases moderately, we would invest in an additional PhD studentship (full or partial will depend on the funding increase)

Scenarios for decrease in GCRF funding: Currently, we are proposing up to 4 PhD studentships (based on overseas fee paying student; this could potentially become 5 PhD studentships (where for 1-2 positions, Home/EU fee paying candidates are stronger). This is in addition to the postdoctoral fellowship. We have more than £20,000 per annum to support additional activities (conference, fieldwork, etc for the beneficiaries) and we can reduce this without it affecting the core requirements of the posts. We have an institutional undertaking to meet the shortfall in years 2 and /or 3 in the event these are significant. Should a reduction be notified for year 1, we would reduce the number of studentships we seek to recruit.

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

Given our commitment to PhD studentships and one postdoctoral fellowship and the fact that we would have started this in **2018-19 (the date of notification in summer 2018 would imply we have to go for January 2019 start)**, our priority will be to monitor the successful progress in 2019-20. In the start year we will focus on induction, development, project design and cohort building. We will use Annual Progress Review (for the PhD students) and Appraisal system (for the postdoctoral fellow) to ensure that the researchers are building capacity and skills through training, are participating in PhD community, creating a cross-disciplinary research group for International Development under the aegis of the Centre for the Study of Democracy, and making an impact.

Priorities for 2019-20:

Establish cohort of PhD and postdoctoral fellow. Relevant supervision and training through Graduate School.

CSD to strengthen multi-disciplinary network of international development scholars through regular work-in-progress workshops and externally focused events.
First annual meeting of international development PhD and ECRs (not just GCRF funded, but also those funded through other schemes in the university). This will be in addition to the Training Workshop for all researchers related to International Development.

If increase in funding, then initially extra postdoc fellow and then additional PhD numbers. Extra resources for support for projects, in particular focused on fieldwork and building networks.

If decrease, secure support from University/Trust Funds, and Faculties/Colleges to maintain the studentships and ancillary 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

This will be the year when researchers should be all prepared to present their work at the international forum, organise a series of workshop involving external stakeholders and different university based research units.

In the second year, the projects of the PhD students and postdoc fellow will be firmly established. Supervision and mentoring oversight will continue. More outward looking focus with second annual meeting involving partners and organisations relevant to the research of the doctoral students and postdoctoral fellow.

If funding increases: the programme will be intensified with more workshop and conferences involving external stakeholders

If funding decreases: Our University has several programmes to support PhD students. The University has undertaken to meet any shortfall and we may in addition seek funding from Quintin Hogg Trust that has generously funded several of these programmes.