

## **SECOND UK-WIDE CALL FOR NIHR GLOBAL HEALTH RESEARCH GROUPS REMIT AND APPLICATION GUIDANCE**

**The closing date for electronic submission of applications is  
1pm 20th October 2017**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In line with the [UK aid and international development strategy](#), HM Treasury allocated Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding to the Department of Health to commission internationally outstanding applied global health research for the direct and primary benefit of patients and the public in low and middle income countries (LMICs) on the [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) list](#).

Following the success of NIHR's 2016/17 call for Global Health Research Units and Groups [[call outcomes page](#)], we are inviting a second round of applications for Groups only.

### **OVERVIEW**

This call will support the creation of NIHR Global Health Research Groups. These are intended to be multi-disciplinary groups, led by a specialist academic group at a UK university or research institute in collaboration with partners in LMICs on the [DAC list](#). The research should be directly and predominantly relevant to improving the health needs of patients and the public in these countries.

The funding aims to support:

- academic groups in the UK with specialist skills relevant to the health needs of developing countries, but with less experience of working in global health, to expand into this priority area;
- global health applied research that has the potential to have a significant impact on the health and lives of the poorest and most vulnerable people in LMICs; and
- health disciplines, subject areas or geographies where there is a global shortage of research or skills.

Collaboration with researchers in ODA eligible countries on the DAC list is essential under this call.

This call will complement other UK-funded ODA health research programmes supported by the Department for International Development (DFID) and the BEIS Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), which aim to meet the health challenges faced by developing countries. It will also complement existing schemes and partnerships that the NIHR co-funds such as the Joint Global Health Trials Scheme. Applicants should let NIHR know if they have or are planning to submit a similar application to any other funding call.

### **AWARDS**

Awards of up to £2m over three years are available to allow academic groups to develop links with researchers from countries on the DAC list as collaborators or partners and to put

in place collaborations and/or partnerships, build capacity, and run pilot projects, with the aim of preparing them for delivery of world-class global health research in the future.

**Research in any field of applied global health that is for the primary benefit of patients and the public in one or more LMICs will be considered.**

We particularly encourage multidisciplinary applications addressing under-funded or under-researched areas which could have a significant impact on the mortality and morbidity of poorest and most vulnerable population(s).

Where researchers wish to work with middle-income countries, they should clarify how the research would target the poorest and most vulnerable populations within these and how their findings could have wider applicability to other low income countries.

The call will consider multiple pilot projects if they can be delivered in the timeframe and form a coherent package of work in the applicant's specialist area. Clinical trials could also be included, as long as a single trial is not the sole purpose of the Group, given that there are other funding mechanisms available for this.

Proposals that seek to address a specific health issue that will support the UK Government's wider [strategy](#) for improving health in LMICs are also welcome.

## **AIMS OF THE NIHR GLOBAL HEALTH RESEARCH GROUP FUNDING**

The aim of this funding is to:

- deliver the UK's ambition to be internationally outstanding in global health research, improving the lives of people in LMICs;
- create an environment where world-class global health research, focused on the needs of LMICs, can thrive;
- translate advances in applied global health research into real benefits for patients and the public in LMICs;
- focus on priority areas of applied global health research which will have the greatest health impact in LMICs, in the short, medium and long term;
- provide high quality research evidence to inform decision-making by public health officials, practitioners and policy makers;
- increase the volume and quality of multi-disciplinary global health research from the UK; and
- develop knowledge and capacity within UK and LMIC institutions that can be translated into global health research practice.

## **AVAILABLE FUNDING**

NIHR Global Health Research Groups:

- £2m per Group to be awarded for a three-year period, starting in April 2018.
- an initial payment of £50,000 will support the inception phase and partnership development. A progress review will take place at 6 months in order to confirm the full release of three years' funding.
- funded Groups that are not deemed to have progressed sufficiently against their agreed plan after 6 months will have their funding terminated.

The amount of funding allocated to each NIHR Global Health Research Group will be informed by the scale, nature and quality of research activity to be conducted. All costs must be fully justified and represent good value for money. The Selection Panel will carefully review these criteria.

### ***ODA Compliance***

In order to be eligible to receive ODA funding, applications must demonstrate how they meet ODA compliance criteria and outline:

- which country or countries on the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) [list of ODA-eligible countries](#) will directly benefit;
- how the application is directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of those countries; and
- how the outcomes will promote the health and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list.

NB: Where partner countries are listed as middle-income on the DAC list (for example China, India, Brazil), the application should demonstrate how the research will benefit the health and welfare of the poorest and/or most vulnerable groups of people in those countries and how their findings could have wider applicability to other low income countries.

Applicants will be expected to provide details of their pathways to impact, with due consideration given to how realistic or appropriate these are in the context of the partner LMICs. These should include plans for engaging stakeholders to ensure beneficial research knowledge is translated into policy and practice. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plans should be developed to determine the extent to which the activities proposed will deliver measurable benefits to patients and the public in LMICs. Any benefit to the UK or other developed countries is a secondary consideration, and a project will not be funded if it is not directly and predominantly relevant to improving the health of people in DAC-list countries.

It will be important to communicate research findings directly to policy makers, practitioners and users, as well as through traditional publication routes. This requirement must be reflected in work programmes and dissemination plans. The NIHR expects that research data will be made available for analysis and re-use.

### ***Partnerships and Collaborations***

It is essential that applicants engage and develop partnerships with researchers and other partners (NGOs, communities, policy-makers) in countries on the DAC list as part of this call.

Applicants should detail how research priorities will be informed by local needs and how specific research questions will be formulated in consultation with researchers, communities and policymakers in those countries, and how these partners will be involved in implementation of the pathways to impact.

Although any funds distributed overseas will be directed through the lead (UK) institution, the proportion of funds directed overseas is at the discretion of the applicants and must be based on the best balance to achieve the programme's objectives, though it is desirable that a large proportion of funding is directed overseas so that LMIC partner participation can be maximised. Details on how collaborations and partnerships with researchers and other partners (NGOs, Governments, businesses) in LMICs will be sustained beyond the duration of this funding cycle should be provided.

Applicants should carefully consider the number of partnerships they wish to propose and the potential complexity of managing a high number of overseas partners. Groups should take into account that with more partnerships the funding will be spread more thinly and may limit the effectiveness of Groups to achieve their research outcomes.

### ***Training and Capacity Building***

The NIHR is committed to developing global health research capacity, and applicants may include a global health research training and capacity building component in their application, which may take place either in the UK or in LMICs. All activities will be considered, including but not limited to Studentships for Masters by Research, provided that these can be shown to add value to the programme and advance the aims of the Group. These activities must be completed within the funding period.

### ***Commissioned Research***

Applications may include up to £200,000 to commission additional research outside of the Group not specified in the plan. Funds allocated through this route must conform to the requirements of ODA funding and must not exceed the overall funding cap for the call.

## ELIGIBILITY

Applications are invited from UK-based (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland) Higher Education Institutions and research institutes.

Institutions will be eligible to lead a maximum of two Global Health Research Group applications under this call.

Partnership building and engagement between UK research organisations and researchers and other partners (NGOs, governments and business) in countries on the DAC list is essential through this call. Where partner countries are listed as middle-income on the DAC list, particular attention should be given to improving the health and welfare of the poorest people in those countries

Non-UK institutions in high-income countries can be partners if there is a strong justification as to why the expertise they are bringing cannot be found in the UK or in an LMIC. Evidence for this needs to be provided in the application.

Applications from single UK institutions or from joint groupings of UK institutions will be considered, though a lead UK institution must be specified. The Director of the proposed Group must be the lead applicant and must be employed by the lead UK institution. In any joint application, funding will be released via a single contract named to the lead UK institution. LMIC partners and any other UK institutions will be expected to have significant input to Group management and form part of the leadership structure; such joint management arrangements need to be fully described in the application. An individual can be named on more than one application provided there is assurance their time can be released to support both applications should they be successful.

A single Director will have a contractual relationship with the lead UK institution and have direct control of the funding. Applications will need to include a signed letter, by an appropriate individual from the university, confirming support for the application.

Institutions which were successful under the first NIHR Global Health Research call (Units and/or Groups) are eligible to submit new applications. Applicants who were unsuccessful in the previous round are welcome to reapply, and are strongly encouraged to take into account Selection Panel feedback.

## ELIGIBLE COSTS

Please see finance guidance Annex.

All programme costs will be scrutinised as part of the assessment process and Selection Panels reserve the right to award only part of the funds requested, where it is deemed suitable.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

The selection criteria will be:

- **Vision:** the strength of the vision, including how the proposed programme of work will fit with the global health agenda;
- **Global health need:** evidence as to why a specific issue or discipline has been identified for further research, and how the research programme and partnerships will address this.
- **Strategy:** the strength and feasibility of the strategic plan;
- **Leadership and management:** the strength of the leadership and ability to implement robust internal programme management and governance.

- **Track-record:** the strength and experience and track-record of the proposed research team and the track-record of the university or institution in delivering research with impact in the selected specialist field ;
- **High quality research:** demonstration that the research is world-class and will benefit sustainable development.
- **Collaboration and partnerships:** the strength of plans to build new partnerships and/or link with existing collaborations and global health networks. The extent to which LMIC partners will be involved in joint framing of research questions and implementing the pathways to impact, and how the programme will facilitate and promote collaborative and cross-disciplinary ways of working.
- **Capacity:** the existing research capacity in the UK and developing countries, the quality of plans for increasing capacity, and their appropriateness in addressing the identified global health challenges.
- **ODA eligibility:** research is directly and predominantly relevant to improving health of people in DAC-list countries.
- **Impact and evaluation:** potential to have a meaningful impact on the health of the poorest in LMICs and the strength of plans for involving users of the research and relevant stakeholders to facilitate translation of research evidence into policy and practice; appropriateness of the plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and impact of the programme.
- **Institutional commitment:** evidence of high-level commitment and contribution of the host university to the NIHR global health research programme.
- **Value for money:** adequately justified budget.

The overarching principles for NIHR funding of transparency, competition and contestability will also be applied.

## SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMETABLE

1. Applications will be assessed by a competitive peer review process with ODA eligibility being a criterion for approval (i.e. applications must be fully ODA compliant to be considered for funding). Initial ODA compliance checks will be carried out by the NETSCC secretariat; proposals that do not meet the eligibility as defined in this document may be rejected without reference to peer review. Peer reviewers will also be asked to comment on ODA compliance and likelihood of significant impact.
2. All eligible NIHR global health applications will be considered by an independent Selection Panel, which will make recommendations to the Department of Health.

The timetable for the selection process will be:

- **13 July 2017** – call opens
- **Shortly after call opens** - webinar briefing event for interested applicants
- **1pm, 20 October 2017** – deadline for receipt of applications
- **31 Jan – 1 Feb 2018** – Selection Panel reviews application and provides recommendations to Department of Health
- **W/c 21 February 2018** – Funding approval letters issued
- **Feb-March** contracting process
- **1<sup>st</sup> April 2018** – Start of funding
- **1<sup>st</sup> October 2018** – 6 month milestone review

There is a rapid contracting requirement for this call. Applicants should ensure relevant departments will be available to engage with the contracting process between February-March 2018. To support this, a draft contract will be made available through the call webpage.

## **INFORMATION BRIEFING**

Interested applicants are invited to attend a webinar briefing event shortly after the call opens. Please e-mail [nihrglobalhealth@nihr.ac.uk](mailto:nihrglobalhealth@nihr.ac.uk) to register your interest in attending.

Further information is available via [www.nihr.ac.uk/globalhealth](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/globalhealth) from the previous funding call, which supported Units and Groups. In the video recordings, Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Scientific Adviser to the Department of Health, discusses the aims of the call, and the DH Global Health Research Advisor and NETSCC programme staff give advice on how to make an application.

## **COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION**

You should complete an online application via the link available on the [www.nihr.ac.uk/globalhealth](http://www.nihr.ac.uk/globalhealth) and include the following information. A Word version of the form with character counts is available through the links section of the website.

### **1. Details of university or institution proposing to host Global Health Research Group**

- a) Contact details of Director
- b) Name/address of university

### **2. Basic details**

- a) Research programme title 'NIHR Global Health Research Group on (subject) at (University of X)'

Title used for contractual purposes for host institution and should not include details of any collaborators or partners (a longer title including partners and collaborators may be used for other purposes).

- b) A brief high-level summary (20-30 words) of your proposed programme of work for the website.
- c) Requested funding amount.

### **3. Name of the proposed host institution**

Details of host institution who will endorse the application and confirm appropriate support should the application be successful.

### **4. History of previous global health applications**

Provide a high-level summary of any relevant/related application submitted to the previous NIHR Global Health Research Call, or any similar other applications in progress with other funders. Please indicate how they involve the Director or co-applicants for the application.

### **5. Summary of proposal in plain English**

In plain English, describe the specific aims of the proposed NIHR Global Health

Research Group. The summary of the proposal should explain to a lay reader the goals and objectives, and the ways in which this research will deliver measurable benefits to patients and the public in DAC-list countries.

## **6. Strategic plan (2018-2021)**

- a) Description of how this work will build on the strategic objectives of the host university and create an environment where world-class global health research, focused on the needs of DAC-list countries, can thrive. Applications should outline how they link to existing institutional partnerships and strategies, how they will complement existing investments in the area, and how they will seek to ensure that capacity and capability is strengthened and sustained in the future.
- b) Description of how the institution is well-placed to be making this application. A description should be included outlining the existing levels of staffing, and of the underpinning facilities, that will be built on through this funding as well as any specific support from your organisation that will be provided for the programme
- c) Plans for how the proposed collaborators, partners and patients and the public, particularly those from DAC-list countries, will be involved in prioritising research topics and themes.  
Describe plans for involving the users of the research and other relevant stakeholders.

## **7. Proposed programme of work**

- a) Proposed programme of activities, including
  - Description of the proposed research programme, how it will fit with the global health agenda;
  - Description of the programme's multidisciplinary approach including social, political and economic perspectives; Description of how strong global collaborations and partnerships will be established and how capacity will be strengthened in LMICs and in the UK;
  - Plans for developing research skills within the Group and in DAC-list countries;
- b) Plans for commissioning further research (optional) (max £200,000) - describe your high level plans for commissioning of additional research, noting that all funding must be allocated according to ODA requirements and must not take the requested funds over the stated maximums £2m).
- c) Sustainability plans beyond the duration of this award, including details on how collaborations and partnerships with researchers and other partners (NGOs, Governments, businesses) in developing countries will be sustained beyond the duration of this funding.

## **8. Measures/indicators of progress and success**

- a) Applicants should outline a minimum of five meaningful measures to determine the progress of the programme within the first 6 months and agreeing to proceed with full funding;
- b) Describe a minimum of five medium (1 year) and long-term (2 years) aims and objectives and how achievement will be measured to determine the success of the programme.

## **9. Director's track-record**

- a) Overview – describe the recognised achievements in their specialist research area, including relevant external sources of funding in the last 5 years;
- b) CV for the Director demonstrating that they are at the forefront of their fields and can lead a Group that will influence the practice of global health research (**upload as attachment**). Relevant publications should be listed in the CV upload and not in the application form.

## **10. Team expertise, special interests and track-record**

Describe the track-record and expertise of each UK and LMIC member and the individual contributions they will make to delivering the strategy. Describe the maturity of existing relationships or plans to develop strong relations with partners in the future.

Please indicate the percentage of time the Director will be involved in the programme. Please provide the names of key individuals and organisations, including details of name, job title, institution and contribution/involvement you will be working with and explain why they have been selected to be a partner.

## **11. Partnerships**

Describe any partnerships you have or plan to develop, and the expected roles of these, which may include:

- DAC-list country partners (researchers, academic institutions, NGOs, government, businesses)
- other international partners
- additional university partners
- other public sector partners
- other public funders of research
- research charities

Please explain why you have selected your chosen partners.

Provide a justification for the number of partners and collaborators involved, particularly when operating across multiple DAC-list countries.

## **12. Structure and governance**

- a) Describe proposed governance and management arrangements. The Director will have responsibility for finance, and any external advisory groups or oversight groups that may be established.
- b) If a joint lead is being proposed, provide the rationale for this approach.
- c) An organogram of the proposed arrangement should be included (upload as an attachment).
- d) Identify resources to undertake all necessary financial audits.
- e) Provide details of structures in place to support research in DAC-list countries including legal and administration support for collaboration agreements, material transfer agreements and institutional ethical reviewing. Provide details of the host institution's structures in place to support research in DAC-list countries including legal and administration support for collaboration agreements, material transfer agreements and institutional ethical reviewing.

## **13. Research capacity**

- a) Details of existing facilities, research posts and studentships relevant to this application;
- b) Details of plans for training and capacity building over the award period.

## **14. ODA compliance**

The ODA compliance statement should be a maximum of one side and explicitly demonstrate how the proposal meets key ODA requirements. It must answer the following three questions in order:

- which country/countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this proposal?
- how is your proposal directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries?
- how do you expect that the outcome of your proposed activities will promote the health needs of a country or countries on the DAC list?

In addition:

- where partner countries are listed as middle-income on the DAC list, particular attention should be given to how you will ensure that the research outcomes improve the health and welfare of the poorest populations in those countries
- consideration should also be given to ensure that the impact will not have any disadvantageous effect relating to gender or disability

## **15. Pathways to impact**

Describe the strategy for delivering impact from this funding to ensure the potential health benefits of the research are realised by people in DAC-list countries. This should include the strategy for engagement with all relevant stakeholders, plans for monitoring and evaluation and plans for dissemination and data sharing.

## **16. Exploitation of Intellectual Property**

Plans and strategy for identifying, managing and exploiting intellectual property. This should include those arising from all collaborations entered into using this funding, and including potential filing of patents, management of know-how and copyright, the establishment of spin-out companies and any income generated from commercialisation of intellectual assets.

## **17. Justification of requested costs**

- a) Provide a description of how requested costs will be deployed;
- b) describe how the requested costs represent value for money;
- c) detail the financial or other contribution from the lead university;
- d) respond to emerging global health issues.
- e) Provide a detailed breakdown of funding by institution and country

## **18. Letters of endorsement from institution/s (attachment/s)**

A declaration (**template provided**) signed by an authorised signatory for the Host Organisation is required confirming they fully endorse the application.

Additionally a letter of endorsement should be provided stating that appropriate support will be provided should the application for funding be successful. The letter should also set out any additional support the university will provide, i.e. in kind activities or financial contributions. Confirmation that this funding will fit with the university's strategic priorities, as set out in the Strategic Plan section, is also required.

## **19. Details of the thematic area(s) and DAC-list countries**

Tick those that apply to your programme of work relating to the subject area(s) and to the DAC-list countries you will partner with.

## **20. Additional information**

This section is optional. It can be used to provide any additional information that has not been covered elsewhere in the form. Please do not use this section to repeat information provided elsewhere.

## **SUMMARY OF INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED**

1. Completed online application form (accessed through [NIHR website](#)).
2. Curriculum Vitae for the proposed Director (4 sides maximum).
3. Curriculum Vitae for the proposed joint lead (if applicable, 4 sides max).
4. A financial plan (**Excel template provided**).
5. An organogram outlining the governance arrangements (upload as a PDF).
6. Letter of endorsement from institution indicating support and involvement for the proposed NIHR Global Health Research Group.
7. Declaration signed by the authorised signatory of the University or Higher Education Institute (**template provided – this needs to be printed, signed, scanned and uploaded**).

8. Research programme contact list of the Director and all co-applicants together with names of institutions and amount of funding being provided (template provided).
9. Letters of support from collaborating institutions and partners.
10. Optional– cover letter from the Director.
11. Optional – supporting diagrams.
12. Optional – References.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

For enquiries about this call, please e-mail us at [nihrglobalhealth@nihr.ac.uk](mailto:nihrglobalhealth@nihr.ac.uk) or call 023 8059 1859

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