



Global Innovation Initiative

Guidance to applicants 2014

Deadline for submission of proposals: 17.00 (GMT); **31 October 2014**

Information: www.global-innovation-initiative.org

Questions: GII@britishcouncil.org

Background

The British Council is pleased to announce the second Call for Proposals to support multilateral research projects through the Global Innovation Initiative (GII).

Announced by former UK Foreign Secretary William Hague and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in June 2013, the Global Innovation Initiative is consistent with Prime Minister David Cameron's and President Barack Obama's broader commitment to enhance higher education collaboration between the UK, the US and other countries. GII was formally launched in the UK in October 2013 by the Rt. Hon David Willetts MP.

Funded by the British Council, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and the U.S. Department of State, GII supports multilateral research collaboration between universities in the UK, US and Brazil, China, India and/or Indonesia. The Global Innovation Initiative will award grants to university consortia focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)-related issues of global significance.

Two parallel, but separate, grant competitions will be offered in the UK and US and will require at least one UK, one US and one selected third country higher education institution to apply in partnership together. Partners with a UK lead institution must apply to the UK competition through the British Council, and those with a US lead institution must apply to the US competition through the Institute of International Education.

For details of the partnerships funded in the first year of GII, visit <http://global-innovation-initiative.org/grantees/>.

Goals and Objectives

Goals:

- To increase the global mobility of students, researcher, faculty and higher education administrators from the UK, US and the selected countries;
- To develop a cadre of people in the UK, US and selected countries who have the international experience, outlook and knowledge to confront global challenges and operate in a global context;
- To encourage international collaborations that develop capacity across a range of universities in the UK, the US, and the selected countries; and
- To forge university and business linkages which support a globally mobile talent pool and a multinational base for the exchange of discovery and innovation.

Objectives:

The proposed partnership activities should be designed to conduct cutting-edge scientific and multilateral research between a UK higher education institution, a US higher education institution and a recognised higher education institution from a selected third country (Brazil, China, India, and Indonesia).

The partnership activities should be designed to the mutual benefit of all partner institutions with the aim of developing research capacity, building sustainable research networks, promoting individual and knowledge mobility, and fostering long-term institutional engagement.

Priority Areas/Themes

The following academic disciplines are Global Innovation Initiative priority areas, and applications must be submitted in one of these categories:

- **Energy, environment and climate change**

Proposals in this category should address issues related to preserving the environment, mitigating and preventing the effects of climate change, and changing the way energy is produced and used through alternative sources.

- **Urban development**

Proposals in this category should address issues connected with rapid global urbanisation and solutions to the challenges of human population density including economic, social, and environmental effects. Proposals can address, but are not limited to, topics related to infrastructure, smart cities, and green and sustainable buildings.

- **Agriculture, food security and water**

Proposals in this category should address issues related to innovative farming and cultivation techniques and practices, the ongoing access to and stable availability of sufficient and nutritious food, the availability of potable water, and water pollution.

- **Global health**

Proposals in this category should address significant issues impacting human health in the global context, with an emphasis on improving health and achieving equity in health for all people worldwide. Proposals should investigate innovative solutions which prevent disease, promote healthy and fulfilling lives, and reduce global health disparities.

In this category, the UK competition also encourages proposals which address either antimicrobial resistance or aging populations.

Interdisciplinary approaches to the research proposal, including the humanities and social sciences, are welcomed provided that the research foundation lies within STEM disciplines.

Project Activities

Proposed activities may include but are not limited to:

- Developing student, faculty and staff, and researcher mobility for research purposes;
- Creating interdisciplinary research collaboration;
- Collaborating on degrees and other approaches to learning and teaching (including dual and joint degrees);
- Travel to and presentation at major academic conferences; and
- Convening panel discussions or symposia.

Note: Proposed activities are encouraged to take place in the UK or the selected third country.

Work Plan/Time Frame

Partnerships selected to receive a Global Innovation Initiative grant will be expected to commence their grant activities from 31 March 2015 and conclude within two years of commencement.

Project Funding

Applicants may submit proposals requesting funding between **£100,000** and **£150,000**. Proposals requesting less than £100,000 and greater than £150,000 will be considered ineligible and will not be included in the selection process. Approximately 10 grants will be awarded in this grant cycle.

All funds will be disbursed directly to the UK lead institution. Funding may be transferred to partner institutions by the UK lead institution for activities which support the objectives of the proposal and the overall initiative.

Funding Guidance

GII funding **can cover:**

- International economy return air travel, accommodation and local subsistence costs
- Travel to and from the airport (UK, US and third country)
- Local in-country travel costs
- Visas, vaccinations, medical insurance for visitors (if necessary for travel)
- Meetings, training events, seminars, conferences integral to the partnership (including room hire, accommodation, and travel and subsistence for participants where appropriate)
- Stakeholder dissemination workshops (including room hire, accommodation, and travel and subsistence for participants where appropriate)
- Publications and associated printing costs, including web page development by in-house/external providers (if appropriate)
- Appropriate costs for fieldwork and for temporary project staff in country
- Essential project equipment up to a limit of £15,000 per project
- Bank charges for transfer of funds to other partners by lead partner institution
- Indirect costs: Institutions are strongly encouraged to maximise the funds towards direct costs. Those institutions that apply the majority of the grant funds to the research project will be viewed favourably in selection. An amount of reasonable and justified indirect costs may be included but should not exceed more than 15% of the proposed costs.

GII funding **cannot cover:**

- Staff time/replacement costs for permanent members of staff in any partner higher education institutions
- Consultancy fees
- Course fees for doctoral, graduate or undergraduate students
- Bench fees
- Purchase or rental of equipment such as IT hardware or software, office furniture, photocopiers
- Mobile phone rental or purchase
- Entertainment costs

Eligibility Criteria/Responsibilities

1. Eligibility

Each partnership should consist of at least three partners – one UK, one US and one from a selected third country. Research consortia may be multilateral and, in addition to the UK and US partners, may include more than one other selected country.

- The lead institution applying through the British Council must be a [recognised higher education institution](#) (partnership proposals led by a US institution must apply through the [Institute of International Education](#)).
- The US partner must be an accredited US higher education institution.
- Partnering institutions in Brazil, China, India and Indonesia must be a higher education institution as defined in their country.
- Overseas branch campuses of a UK or US higher education institution are not eligible as partners.
- British Council will only accept one proposal per UK-US-selected country (Brazil, China, India, and/or Indonesia) research team. However, an institution may be involved in multiple, distinct proposals. Proposals submitted to both the UK and US competitions by the same research team and addressing the same research topic will be ruled ineligible.

2. Role of the lead institution

The lead UK institution, applying through the UK competition, is responsible for

- submitting the partnership's application, narrative, and required supporting materials;
- programme coordination, report submission and fiduciary responsibilities for the two year duration of the grant award.

3. Visas

Researchers may be of any nationality. Visas necessary for travel as part of the project are the sole responsibility of the individual. The British Council is not able to assist with visa applications.

4. Taxes

Grants awarded by the British Council as part of the Global Innovation Initiative are not subject to UK tax.

Applying for funding

Proposal Guidelines

The lead institution is required to submit an application on behalf of the partnership.

A web-based application form is available on the British Council's International Higher Education (IHE) website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/opportunities/global-innovation-initiative-grant>.

Required attachments can be downloaded from this [website](#) and must be submitted along with the application form. Documents must be word processed and completed in English.

Required attachments:

a. Narrative - A proposal narrative detailing the programme components, action plan, and desired outcomes is required. Narratives should be no more than **10 A4 pages** in length (font: Arial, size 11; margins: 2.54 cm). Up to 5 additional pages are allowed for appendices that include tables, charts, diagrams, photos which support the research proposal. Citations should be included as footnotes.

The following components should be included in the proposal narrative:

- Vision
Proposals should include a statement of need on behalf of the consortia partners. This section should outline the partnership's project, how it is innovative, and how it will address issues of global significance relating to one of the four focus areas for this grant competition. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to detail how they are using one of the [Eight Great Technologies](#) in their project, if applicable.
- The Partnership
A description of when and how the partnership was established and contact between the partners to date, including any joint activities, should be included. If the partnership is new, briefly describe any relevant meetings or communications and the rationale for working together (including previous experience each partner has of working on the chosen priority area). The narrative should detail how the consortia will ensure that all partners are equally involved in delivering the project and all will equally benefit from the project outcomes.
- Project Management
This section should detail on the coordination plan between the partner institutions, as well as a breakdown of duties and responsibilities. (The lead UK institution will be responsible for all reporting and fiduciary requirements of the grant which will be outlined in the Grant Agreement of successful applicants.)

- Programme Activities
The description should include an explanation of each activity as well as a justification of its relevance to the objectives of the Global Innovation Initiative.
- Monitoring and Evaluation
An evaluation plan, including a description of methodology and an outline of the changes and level of impact which the partnership hopes to achieve through its activities should be detailed in the narrative. These must relate to the objectives of the Global Innovation Initiative. Include simple, measurable indicators of success. If awarded a GII grant, grantees will be provided with additional information regarding monitoring and bi-annual reporting requirements.
- Measures of Sustainability
Measures of sustainability for the long-term endurance of the research partnership should be built into the proposal and will be prioritised in selection. Proposals should describe the expected results and outcomes from the project; expected benefits to the development of research capacity at designated other country partner institutions; any anticipated knowledge transfer; and how this project may lead to broader institutional collaboration between the partners.

b. Work plan – Applicants must include a work plan or Gantt chart detailing their partnership activities within the 2 year grant period of 31 March 2015 – 31 March 2017.

c. Budget – Complete the spreadsheet [template](#) and provide a budget narrative.

Budget spreadsheet guidelines:

- Provide a detailed expenditure breakdown in such a way that it can easily be reviewed
- Insert as many line items as needed to detail expenditure
- Use pounds sterling
- Include only eligible costs (see Funding Guidance, page 4)
- Include details on institutional cost share across the partnership

Institutional cost share is expected as a demonstration of the commitment of all partner institutions to the proposed project. Partnerships demonstrating significant institutional cost share will be considered more competitive during the selection process. Institutions' cost share should reflect their respective financial capacities and resources.

Cost share can be direct and/or in-kind: examples include direct funds contribution, donated staff time, support for travel and accommodations, donated materials and/or facilities.

Additional cost share from the private sector and other organisations is encouraged.

Budget narrative guidelines:

- Maximum length: two A4 pages (font: Arial, size 11, margins: 2.54 cm).
- Justify the resources required to undertake the research project and why the cost is mandatory.
- Explain why the resources requested are appropriate for the research proposed taking into account the nature and complexity of the research proposal.
- All items requested on the budget template should be justified in the budget narrative.

- d. Letters of support** – Each partner institution must submit a letter of support from an authorised official detailing the institution’s commitment to undertaking the project and complying with all stated regulations. Appropriate institutional officials include university Vice Chancellors, Pro Vice Chancellors International or Research, Heads of Departments, etc. The letters of support will be considered in the selection process and will assist in demonstrating institutional commitment. The letter of support should not exceed 2 sides of A4 and should be on headed paper and signed and dated.

Letters of support should include:

- The nature of the collaboration
- How the partner is involved in the project
- The relevance of the proposed work to partners
- Details of partner contributions (in-kind or cash)

Optional additional letters of support— Applicant institutions/researchers may submit up to three additional letters from organisations outside the partnership in support of the research team’s abilities and experience, and/or in support of the research value of the project. These letters of support can either be in support of an individual member of the partnership or of the partnership as a whole.

- e. Curriculum vitae** – The CVs of all relevant individuals who will participate in grant-funded partnership research activities must be submitted with the proposal. At least one CV per partnership institution is required.

Each CV must be limited to two A4 pages (font: Arial, size 11, margins: 2.54 cm) per person and include:

- Contact information for each researcher (address, phone, email address and website)
- Employment history
- Degrees and postgraduate qualifications
- Patents
- Most recent publications, within the last 5 years, in refereed journals relevant to the project

Submitting your application

All required documents must be named as follows:

Lead PI initials_UniversityName_Document type (eg. SJB_BCUniversity_LettersofSupport)

Documents with multiple sections must be uploaded on the web form as **one** file. For example, all CVs should be uploaded as one file.

The application form and required attachments must be submitted via the [web form](#) by 17.00 (GMT) on **Friday 31 October 2014**. All required documents must be attached when submitting the web-based application form.

Applications will be acknowledged within one week of receipt.

Review and Selection

Review process

Applications will be accessed for eligibility upon receipt. Applicants whose application is rejected at the eligibility stage will have one week to appeal against the decision.

Eligible proposals will then be peer-reviewed in a two-tier selection process:

Tier 1: Proposals will be assessed by experts within their thematic areas.

Tier 2: Selected finalists from Tier 1 will be reviewed by a selection panel comprising experts in international research partnerships.

Selected UK-led partnerships will be submitted to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills for final endorsement.

Applicants will be notified of the results of the selection process by 31 March 2015.

Review criteria

Applications will be reviewed in the following five areas:

1. **Scientific merit of the proposal:** Proposals should demonstrate the unique and critical value of the research being proposed, specifically emphasizing innovative solutions to a global STEM field challenge. The expertise and relevant experience of the proposed lead investigators and research teams from each partner institution should be clearly delineated.
2. **Potential impact of the proposal:** The proposal should demonstrate the significant impact the project will have on the participating institutions, local communities, and society at large. The research should have globally important implications and assist in increasing the capacity of the partner institutions to conduct high-level research and international collaborations.
3. **Proposal feasibility:** The proposal should demonstrate the ability of the research team to undertake the project outlined in the proposal within the two year grant

- period. Factors that will be taken into consideration include the operational strategy, budget, monitoring and evaluation plan, and measures for sustainability.
4. **Strength of partnership:** The proposal should demonstrate the strength of the cooperation between the partner institutions beyond the research team members. The strong commitment of each institution to the partnership should be demonstrated, particularly in the proposal narrative and letters of support. Partnerships should be designed to increase the research capacity of all institutions with particular emphasis placed on the selected other country/countries.
 5. **Cost-Effectiveness and Cost Sharing:** The overhead, indirect costs, and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary, appropriate, and relevant to the research project. The proposal should maximise cost share through direct institutional contributions, indirect institutional contributions, and private sector support.

Additional consideration may be given to the number of students, faculty and staff exchanges; plans for knowledge transfer; expertise and competence of the proposed lead investigators and teams from each partner; the interdisciplinary nature of the project; and, all things being equal in the final review, the diversity of the institutions, the proposal themes, and partner countries.