

PARC Partnerships Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

Aims of the call

- The aim of this call to contribute to advancing a transformed mode of Africa research and partnerships. The call, through its very nature, aims to help overcome some of the fundamental power imbalances often found in global North-Africa research collaborations. Thus, it does not require areas for investigation to align with the global development agenda and centres the ideas of African scholars and African institutions, about what needs to be investigated, why, and with whom, and about how transformed, more balanced partnership arrangements should actually look like.
- The call requires African scholars and institutions to lead the research with at least one Bristol researchers as a collaborator. As with any joint project it is expected that the research proposal will be co-developed reflecting the expertise and experience of the team, and that it will take advantage of opportunities for capacity-sharing. The call makes room for African scholars and institutions to define what capacities or resources they may seek to provide to and receive from their Bristol partners. Please include such plans within your Case for Support.
- The call centres the ideas of African scholars and institutions about the kinds of impacts they seek to achieve locally and/or beyond with their proposed research – and about how they wish to communicate, disseminate or engage others on, the findings of their project in pursuit of that impact.

Scope of the project

- Projects may have basic or applied research aims or potentially a combination of both. The focus of the project can cover more than one geographical area. The proposed approach will be assessed against the stated aims of the research and how well it meets the aims of the call. **Do read the application form guidance and assessment criteria.**
- The call is open to all research areas as long as there is the ability to collaborate with a suitable Bristol researcher. Please see the Seeking a Partner section in this FAQ and in the call guidance.
- Whilst PARC is currently interested in three capstone programmes, this is a different strand of activity and no preference or quota of awards will be given to applications falling into these areas.
- Must an African university partner with a UK university? Yes, this call requires an Africa-based lead researcher to collaborate with a Bristol researcher. Other UK researchers can be involved but there is no funding to cover their participation.

- Investigating complimentary issues between the African and Bristol collaborators is one valid possible approach. However if, for example, your project focuses on transitional justice in Kenya, there is no expectation that your project requires Bristol researchers to identify relevant complimentary issues affecting the UK. If the focus that you propose is solely on a local issue, then you will need to work with a Bristol collaborator who would be interested in participating in that research. It may be within your project design there is room for mutual learning and capacity-building around the issue you are exploring.
- The expected outputs of the research will be entirely related to the nature of the project. However we do expect at least one academic publication per project to be produced.

Addressing power imbalance within your project

- The call asks you to consider and address potential 'power imbalances' in current research between the Global North and Africa. The emphasis we wish you to consider is on the imbalances that you perceive and that you're concerned with. This should inform the way you want to try and redress these through your project design.
- For example there may be imbalances within the research itself or the dissemination of that research. There's no expectation that there should be an equal weight given to each of these. It is up to the applicant to decide what their concern is and address this within their project.
- Please consider the power imbalances related to your research area and experience whether this in STEM, the social sciences or the arts and humanities. This could be in the way collaborations unfold or in the way the data collection the data analysis is designed, or in the way that publications are planned. Another element might be power imbalance that is not strictly speaking in terms of the collaboration itself, but in terms of the broad agenda for research within which you might want to design your project. For example it may be that your research idea falls outside international and/or development frameworks. In which case you may put your idea forward as a priority that you wish to pursue because its locally relevant or internationally relevant, even though it may not fit within existing global frameworks.

Eligibility

- Only one application may be submitted by an African researcher as Principal Investigator (PI). A Bristol researcher may collaborate on up to two different projects.
- If a PI does not currently have a contract in place with their proposed host organisation, it is acceptable for the host institution to provide a written promise of a contract dependent on receiving these funds. The Letter of Support from the host organisation should detail this. It will strengthen the letter if it is clear that the host organisation will ensure that putting that contract in place won't cause undue delays to the commencing of the project.
- We expect the PI to lead on the project and propose a suitable structure for their team. For example, this could include working with early career researchers at their institution. The structure, roles and responsibilities of team members will need to be justified within the application form and be commensurate their research experience.
- The call requires that the award is held by an African higher education or research institution. If a government institution such as a Ministry of Health wished to participate

they would need to partner with one of these types of institution. Please contact us if you have any questions about whether your organisation is eligible.

Project budget, institutional overheads and in-kind contributions

- Each project budget should cover the budget of the host organisation as well as that of the Bristol partner. Please use the Project Budget Form to detail the total cost of the project.
- Overhead costs can be included in your budget. The African host organisation or other organisations based in DAC countries can request the cost of overheads up to a value of 20% of staff costs. These must be part of the total requested budget.
- Overheads for Bristol partners (Estates and Indirect Costs) are not permitted.
- In-kind contributions are income contributions that you're not requesting within the Project Budget Template. These are contributions that your team is providing to the project over and above the grant request. These could be financial or non-financial, for example research time or access to specialist resources.
- Where feasible, we encourage you to provide details of such in-kind contributions that your host institution and other participating organisations can make in support of your project. This will enhance your project by showing commitment to the collaboration by your host institution and/or other organisations. Such information should be included within the appropriate Letter of Support.

Seeking Bristol partners

- We welcome applications from African researchers who do not yet have connections to the University. [Please complete the Partner Enquiry Form found on the call webpage.](#)
- We are offering this service until 22 October in order to help facilitate connections. However if you already have a contact at Bristol or you wish to directly approach a Bristol academic there's no need to submit a Partner Enquiry Form.
- Whilst the range of academic disciplines at Bristol is broad, unfortunately we don't cover everything. Therefore unfortunately if you can't find your research area listed we won't be able to broker a connection. You can check our academic schools and research centres by faculty here: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/faculties/>

Setting up the project

- We recognise internal processes are sometimes subject to delay. We have some flexibility in our timescales to agree a reasonable timeline to commence project activities for each individual project. However we are obliged to ensure that the projects through this funding commence in a timely fashion.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning aspect

- Award holders will engage with PARC in a simple monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) process to strengthen insights into the practice, and understandings of the impacts and implications, of new Africa-led and centred research collaboration modes, and how to further embed and enhance such approaches. The MEL process is still being developed, but the intention is that it will not be burdensome. It may include one or two collaborative activities with the cohort of awardees. We will inform award holders of the process when the grants are confirmed.