



Transformation in Africa
research and partnerships

PARC Partnerships Fund 2021

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Perivoli Africa Research Centre (PARC)

Our Mission

Our point of departure is a recognition of the historically-rooted inequalities in the international research ecosystem and enduring power and epistemic imbalances in many global North–Africa academic collaborations and partnerships.

These inequities have imposed limitations not only on African research institutions and actors but also, as importantly, on the relevance and use of generated knowledge for innovation and positive social and economic change. In short, the imbalances have harmed Africa’s pursuit of its own development objectives.

Our mission is to help envision, model and champion a different mode of doing research with Africa that advances such a transformation. Our quest reflects the University of Bristol’s wider culture of social responsibility, alternative thinking and activism and draws on its vibrant work on tackling the challenge of decolonisation.

What we do

In pursuit of its mission PARC seeks to act as:

- A **connector** of people and constituencies within the University, the African continent and globally who are invested in the generation and use of knowledge to accomplish Africa’s priority agendas.
- A **catalyst** and **forum** for interdisciplinary inquiry, practice and learning predicated on mutual respect and inclusion.

Our work spans four focus areas:

1. Inquiry and thought leadership on transforming [research cooperation](#)
2. Capstone programmes of research and [policy engagement](#)
3. Mutual knowledge sharing and [capacity strengthening](#)
4. Communities of [interest](#)

Call summary

This new opportunity is open to applications from Africa-based researchers at African institutions to lead Africa-centred projects in collaboration with colleagues at the University of Bristol. Building on advances made in the UK research sector toward promoting greater equity in collaboration with global South partners, this funding aims to help embed a mode of partnerships that goes further in redressing the multiple layers of power imbalances often found in global North-Africa research. As such, the fund's goal is to contribute to a championing of transformation in Africa research and partnerships, within the University of Bristol and beyond. This programme has been made possible by generous philanthropic gifts from Alumni and friends of the University.

Context

Intensifying debate and initiatives on equitable global North-South research partnerships have galvanised awareness and acceptance of the need for ensuring greater fairness in the setting of agendas for inquiry, the division of labour and administrative arrangements within research projects, as well as access to resources and rewards – such as academic publications. Many scholars across disciplines in Africa and in Bristol are presently engaged in collaborative projects that aim to put such approaches into practice.

In parallel, evolving African perspectives on the imperative of decolonising higher education and research are focusing attention on other interrelated power imbalances that often manifest in global North-Africa partnerships and require redress. Among others, and occurring variously across the different subject areas, these include:

- The frequent requirement of identifying research foci within the frame of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which may preclude inquiry on other African priorities not captured in this global framework.
- A typically uni-directional development and research 'gaze', which posits the global North as 'developed' or advanced and Africa as 'developing'. The gaze typically implies global North involvement in research to aid the continent and forecloses bi-directional investigations of common or comparable development challenges or even a reversed South to North investigation of Northern challenges.
- Vast disparities in infrastructures and resources required for research.
- A dominant use of Western epistemologies, theories and concepts to guide the collection and the interpretation of data, with little value given to existing African knowledge systems and theoretical perspectives or explicit new theorizing from the continent.
- The privileging of global/Northern over local audiences in the communication of research and its findings – underpinned by the almost exclusive use of Western languages.

And finally:

- A frequent positioning of global North institutions as senior and African institutions as junior partners within collaborations.

Such perspectives highlight the importance of centring African constituencies in defining where and how research collaborations with the global North need to change, and what forms of 'equitable partnerships' arrangements are desired for what purposes.

Aim of call

This call aims to support and help embed research collaborations that build on ideas of African scholars and institutions about what fairer, transformed partnership arrangements should look like. As such the call is open to any Africa-led project that addresses any basic or applied aims prioritised by the African applicant, and that is conducted in collaboration with researchers at Bristol. Research areas may be empirical or theoretical, from any discipline, and related to local and/or national, sub-regional or continental, African Union aspirations for social progress.

Collaborations may build on existing Africa-University of Bristol partnerships. However, applications are also encouraged from African scholars and institutions who do not yet have connections to the University. If you are in this position please refer to the **Seeking a Bristol Partner** section below for more information about how we will help with this.

The collaborative research projects may be uni-, multi- or interdisciplinary and include non-academic stakeholders such as policymakers, civil society organisations or other local actors as appropriate. The collaboration will be designed to put into practice equitable partnership arrangements envisaged by the African applicant to redress key imbalances in global North-Africa research relations. Methodologies will be as suited to the pursuit of such a partnership mode as they are to the solving of the research problem.

Applications must include plans for the submission of at least one academic publication and must include a learning aspect focused on deriving lessons from their Africa-centred collaboration modes and on sharing these, through active contributions, with the PARC Community of Interest. 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. Further details will be provided at award stage.

The budget for this call is £200,000 and within this envelope we anticipate funding approximately 3-5 projects. Whilst no precise upper award limit is given, applications for a significant portion of the budget must make an outstanding value for money case. Bids for lower value awards are also very welcome. Projects are expected to last up to 12 months and commence in Spring 2022.

Eligibility

The core team should consist of an African researcher, the principal investigator, based at an African HEI or research institution as lead and at least one Bristol researcher. We term the lead research organisation the “host organisation”. The host organisation must ensure that the principal investigator will have a contract in place that covers the duration of the award.

The application must be made through the African host organisation (e.g. a University, Research Institute) where the appropriate authority has agreed for the application to take place.

The Bristol researchers can be either an experienced researcher (over seven years post-PhD) or an early career researcher (e.g. postgraduate up to within 7 years post-PhD). We would expect their experience to be reflected in the role they take on within the project, e.g. co-investigator or named researcher. Where a Bristol early career researcher is participating, we would expect the application

to detail what additional support they will receive from Bristol colleagues, commensurate with their prior experience.

Additional eligible partners

Whilst the funding offer does not provide for a large consortium, additional partners are welcome in order to adequately address the focus of your application.

- Other African co-investigators and researchers can be costed
- Non-academic African partners can be costed
- Academic or non-academic partners from other DAC countries can be costed
- Other academic UK partners not based at Bristol can be included but not costed
- Non-academic UK partners can be costed where a strong justification for their costs can be provided
- Academic or non-academic partners from other non-DAC countries can be included but not costed

Funding available

Africa-based costs

- All direct costs will be funded at 100%.
- The proposed budget must be provided in Pounds Sterling (GBP). When converting currency, please use www.xe.com.
- Payments will be made in GBP and if applicants anticipate bank charges for receiving the funds in GBP then they can include the bank charges in their budget.
- No more than 20% of the budget can be used to purchase equipment. In this case equipment is defined as items costing over £10,000.
- Dedicated research management or administrative support to facilitate project management and delivery can be included.
- 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.
- All activities must take place within the project dates, for example a flight cannot take place after the project finishes even if the ticket is purchased before the end date.
- All expenses should be good value for money, standard class public transport and economy air travel. Visa costs are permitted.
- Be sure to include all costs of outputs, including publication costs and impact activities.
- All expenditure mentioned throughout the application should be accounted for. If these are being covered elsewhere, this should be outlined in the budget justification.
- Computing equipment can only be claimed where the host institute does not already provide this, or where the equipment needed is specialist and required for this project. Any such items should be sourced by the institution where the user is based.
- Capital or infrastructure expenditure (e.g., basic office/laboratory/accommodation furniture or equipment, building/site construction, maintenance or refurbishment work, etc.) is not an eligible cost under this call. However additional costs incurred by existing facilities or infrastructures relating to their use as a part of the research or in the archiving of project-specific research data/outputs may be considered.

UK costs

- The direct costs of Bristol partners will be supported at 100%, and DA staff costs will also be covered at 100% if they are essential for the work.
- No Estates and Indirect costs can be included for this call.
- The Bristol collaborator must complete a Worktribe costing and select 'UoB Alumni' as the funder with the 'PARC Partnership Fund' scheme template . Please seek support from Bristol's [Finance Services](#) as necessary to complete the form
- If you have any questions about costs you can include please contact us in good time prior to submission: parc-partnerships@bristol.ac.uk.
- A completed and fully approved Worktribe costing will act as confirming support from the Bristol collaborator's School.

Application process and timeline

- Applicants are encouraged to attend and participate in the call webinar. The webinar will be recorded and posted on the [call page](#) afterwards, including responses to questions raised.
- Applicants submit application form and all supporting documentation by the deadline. Please see Guidance for developing proposals from page 9 onwards.

We strongly encourage you to submit your application as early as possible. This will help us in case an issue requires clarification. Should we be unable to resolve an issue by the deadline we may not be able to forward your application to the panel.

Please note: the University's last day before Christmas closure is Thursday 23 December 2021 and it will open on Wednesday 5 January 2022.

- Applications confirmed or rejected
- Project set-up information and support provided
- Due diligence completed
- Contracts issued
- Projects commence

Call timeline

Call opens	15 September 2021
Call launch/application support webinar	22 September 2021
Partnership request form deadline	8 October 2021
End of brokerage service period provided by Bristol	22 October 2021
Call deadline	7 January 2022
Panel	w/c 24 January 2022
Outcomes announced	early February 2022
Project setup	from February 2022
Awards commence	from Spring 2022

Contractual arrangements

Funding for this call has been gifted to Bristol from a charitable donation. Bristol acts as the Funder for this call but will also act as a co-applicant on applications. In order to minimise the administrative burden for the African lead institution and Bristol, funds for the Bristol budget will be retained. The remainder of the budget will be passed to the African lead institution. The terms of the award will be covered by a single agreement which covers:

- Bristol as Funder, and the African PI's responsibilities to Bristol in the Funder role;
- The collaboration agreement, setting out that the African partner is the research lead and how Bristol and the African partner will work together. .

A template version of the collaboration agreement will be available from the call webpage:

<https://parc.bristol.ac.uk/parc-partnerships-fund/>

Due diligence

Due Diligence is the investigation, or exercise of care, that a reasonable business or person is expected to take before entering into an agreement or contract with another party. It supports good decision-making – understanding costs, benefits and risks. Depending on the specifics of your application, the University of Bristol may require a due diligence process to be carried out before an award can be made. We will be in touch if we require anything further once you've submitted your application.

Seeking a Bristol partner

We welcome applications from African researchers who do not yet have connections to the University. We have provided time within the call schedule to help you connect to Bristol researchers. Please complete the Partner Enquiry Form and send this into us. While we cannot guarantee to match you to a suitable researcher we will do our best to help broker new connections.

1. [Please complete the Partner Enquiry Form found on the call webpage.](#)
2. Please try to self-identify potential Bristol researchers where possible following the links provided in the Enquiry Form. You will be in the best position to determine whether Bristol researcher's profile is relevant to your project idea.
3. Please remember to include a short CV when you submit your form.
4. Submit the form and your CV to parc-partnerships@bristol.ac.uk no later than **Friday 8th October**.
5. We will try to identify a suitable and available researcher as quickly as possible.
6. This brokerage service will finish on **22nd October**. This is the latest date we will respond to any submitted request.

Assessment process and criteria

Applications will undergo expert peer review comprised of Africa- and Bristol- based academics. The review panel will be chaired by the Pro-Vice Chancellor of Research.

Process

- Applications reviewed and checked by call administrators. Queries raised and addressed
- Applications sent to Panel and given preliminary ranking and comments
- Panel discuss applications and agree ranking.
- Ranked list provided to the funder (DARO, Bristol's charitable donations team) for final approval.
- Outcomes announced.

Criteria

- The project aligns to African-centred academic or social/policy-focused aims and demonstrates the potential for relevant high-quality outcomes.
- The project design actively addresses any potential power imbalances and takes advantage of its Africa-centred collaboration mode in pursuing its specific research or social/policy aims. A learning aspect focused on deriving lessons from the collaboration is included.
- The planned activities are appropriate and likely to deliver the aims of the call, demonstrating research excellence and novelty. The project management design is clear and appropriate, with sufficient consideration given to ethical considerations, gender and other characteristics.
- The project team possesses the necessary balance of skills, including an appropriate level of interdisciplinarity and relevant stakeholders.
- In aid of its sustainability the project involves appropriate engagement with relevant end-users; the potential to deliver research or applied outcomes at the local, national and/or international level beyond the initial award period; and the potential for African and Bristol partners to develop their research profile
- The project fully justifies its costs, includes only eligible costs and represents good value for money.

Scheme and post award requirements

- There will be support provided by Bristol to help awardees navigate the requirements of the project set-up phase. This will include agreeing a timeline to commence project activities.
- Reporting:
 - interim and final financial reports
 - interim and final project reports
- Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) activity – Further details will be provided at award stage. It is likely activity will include one or two collaborative meetings as a cohort, with some material requested as part of the final report.
- Awardees are expected to have ongoing participation in PARC's Community of Interest and as such may be asked to provide additional updates beyond the end date of the award.

Research Integrity

The University of Bristol is a centre for high-quality research and seeks to promote the highest standards of ethical, scholarly and professional integrity, to give due consideration to the legal and ethical issues arising from research activities. Key policies govern the good conduct of research and apply to everyone carrying out research under the auspices of the University, including:

1. The University '[Ethics of Research Policy and Procedure](#)' which governs the ethics of research across the University. This policy is concerned to protect the rights, dignity, health, safety and privacy of research participants, the welfare of animals and the integrity of the environment. The University is also concerned to protect the health, safety, rights and academic freedom of researchers and the reputation of the University as a centre for properly conducted, high quality research.
2. The University '[Research Governance and Integrity Policy](#)' which aims to provide helpful and constructive support for anyone involved in research at the University. The Policy is based on the UK Research Integrity Office's Code of Practice for Research and reinforces that research at the University is of the highest standard and undertaken with integrity and honesty.

The University of Bristol is committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of all those involved with research projects conducted through the University, its staff and/or agents working on its behalf.

Details on policies processes and resources in relation to preventing harm in research can be found at: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/research-governance/preventing-harm/>

Contacts and advice

Please send an email to: parc-partnerships@bristol.ac.uk if you would like any advice about this call.

Guidelines for developing proposals

Application form

The form can be downloaded from the call page: <https://parc.bristol.ac.uk/parc-partnerships-fund/>

It is important that you keep to the indicated formatting requirements and word limits otherwise your application will be deemed ineligible.

Case for Support (1200 words max)

Aims and Objectives

Please provide a description of your project's overall aims, objectives and expected outcomes. You should explain how your project is relevant to call and give an overview of research and/or policy background and context.

Partnership mode and approach to learning aspect

Please explain which kinds of global North-Africa power imbalances your envisaged partnership arrangements will seek to redress. You should explain what the arrangements will be and how you expect them to redress the imbalances. Please also describe how you intend to derive learning from putting these arrangements into practice and how you plan to share lessons learnt through active contributions to the PARC Community of Interest. Additionally, where early career researchers are involved, please describe how they will be provided with advice and support by a more experienced colleague(s).

Programme of activities

Please include an outline of the programme of work and objectives, the methodology(ies), the research excellence and novelty of the proposal, and the expected outputs. As appropriate to your research programme, please detail how you will take account of gender and other characteristics such as race or age, and any relevant intersections between these.

Dissemination and outcomes (academic, cultural, economic or social)

Please tell us what you expect to produce by the end of the project and describe the measures you will take to disseminate these outputs. Please explain any academic and/or non-academic (cultural, economic, social) outcomes you expect from your project and describe the pathways you will take in order to realise these.

Project management (300 words max)

Please describe how you will manage the project including: the team's roles and responsibilities, including diversity and inclusion considerations; the communication plan; the project timetable and key milestones; any digital and data management aspects if applicable; any potential risks and your mitigation plans. Please ensure that readers can easily cross-reference between this and your Workplan.

Ethics and preventing harm in research (250 words)

Please include any ethical considerations of your research as applicable. Please provide brief details of how you and your organisation have measures in place to prevent harm in research (sometimes

referred to as “safeguarding”). Explain how you will take account of national C-19 guidelines and restrictions.

Where an ethical review is required, this should be undertaken by the host organisation prior to the research activity commencing. Details of the ethics review process should be documented including links to the host organisation ethics policy and procedure.

If the project proceeds then the Bristol collaborator must register the study with the Research Governance Team in the University of Bristol to satisfy our internal Quality Assurance (QA) processes, evidencing that a favourable ethical opinion is in place.

Justification of resources (300 words)

Note that it is not sufficient merely to list what is required. All resources **from all partners** must be fully justified, and you should provide a breakdown and full written explanation of costs, considering the nature and complexity of the activities proposed. Please also note any potential sources of additional funding or in-kind support where applicable.

Current or potential knowledge assets or intellectual property (200 words max)

Please complete this section as applicable. Information in this section is designed to prompt discussion of these issues at the start of your collaboration. It will help us to develop an appropriate collaboration agreement and make that process smoother. Knowledge assets include knowhow, data, methods, models, designs, software, or inventions and which may or may not be formally registered intellectual property

- Tell us if there are any background knowledge assets or any information already associated with the project (this may or may not be formally registered Intellectual property)
- Let us know if you expect to generate any knowledge assets during the project and what you would like to do with them (e.g. share them with partners, publish them openly, use them for further research and teaching, protect them, commercialise them, etc.)
- Let us know if confidential information may be exchanged.

Additional attachments

Project Budget Form (Annex 1)

You will need to submit a fully itemised budget which must be in line with our guidance on eligible budget. The “Project Budget Form” Excel template can be downloaded from the [call page](#). This form asks for detailed information on non-Bristol based costs. Please also include the total for Bristol-based costs and the Overall Project Budget total at the bottom of this form. Detailed Bristol-based costs should be provided in Annex 2. Should your application be successful, information on financial and narrative reporting will be provided. This will include an itemised financial report, which should be supported by invoices, receipts and records which may be requested for review. If you have any questions about costs you can include please contact us in good time prior to submission.

Worktribe ‘generic submission report’ (Annex 2)

The Bristol collaborator must complete a Worktribe costing and select ‘UoB Alumni’ as the funder with the ‘PARC Partnership Fund’ scheme template. Please seek support from Bristol’s Finance Services as necessary. A completed and fully approved Worktribe costing will also act as confirming

support from their School. If you have any questions about costs you can include please contact us in good time prior to submission.

Workplan (Annex 3) – 1 page max

The workplan should show how you will deliver your plans over the course of the project in a clear fashion. It will include tasks or activities covering research, dissemination/impact, project management, learning, critical milestones and key deliverables. Please ensure that the plan reflects your Case for Support and Project Management sections and that readers can easily cross-reference between them.

Visual evidence (Annex 4) – 1 page max – Optional attachment

You may submit one side of A4 as visual evidence in support of your application. This can include images, graphs and tables and should be submitted as a word/PDF document. This is not compulsory.

Letter(s) of Support (Annex 5)

As part of your full application, we need to ask you to submit completed letters of support from your host organisation and any project partner(s). A project partner is defined as an organisation who contributes resources (money or in-kind) to the project.

The Bristol collaborator does not require a letter of support. Support from their School will be provided through a completed and fully approved Worktribe costing.

Each letter of support should include the following information:

- Confirmation that the host organisation/project partner is happy to be involved in the research project being proposed by you
- Confirmation that the host organisation/project partner understands and agrees to their role on the project
- Confirmation that the host organisation will ensure that the principal investigator will have a contract in place that covers the duration of the award
- Details of how being involved in the project will benefit the host organisation/project partner and the applicant/research team
- Details of strengths/value added they would bring to the proposal (including any contributions in kind, e.g. research time, specialist resource)

The letter will need to be signed by someone with the authority to represent the host organisation/project partner. A letter on headed paper, or an email from a business email account, including the signatory's full name and position within their organisation would be acceptable.

Curriculum Vitae (CVs)

Please provide a two-page CV for the Principal Investigator (PI) and any named researchers. Please keep to 2cm borders and 11pt Arial (or similar) font.

Checklist

- All questions completed
- Annex 1: Completed Project budget form
- Annex 2: Completed Worktribe 'generic submission report' (detailing Bristol costs)
- Annex 3: Workplan (1 page max)
- Annex 4: Visual evidence (1 page max) – Optional attachment
- Annex 5: Completed letters of support (from host organisation and any project partners)
- CVs for the Investigators attached (2 pages max each for PI and other names researchers)