

Bangladesh Medical Education Baseline Research Grant

Call for proposals

Background

There is a government drive in Bangladesh to professionalise and upskill their health sector and there is an opportunity for the UK to support this agenda. There may be other local priority areas for Bangladesh, where the quality and expertise of the UK higher education, research and skills sectors could develop valuable and mutually beneficial partnerships.

A recent review of the role of tertiary education on development¹ revealed the potential of tertiary education to support development in low and lower middle-income countries through programmes which develop skills and knowledge but highlighted the importance of aligning such programmes with the local contextual needs. Tertiary education is not always fulfilling its potential to support sustainable development due to a misalignment with local context and needs and a lack of coherent collaboration between relevant actors including education institutions, industry, local and national government, and international partners.

The British Council is developing a new global higher education programme from April 2021 which will use mutually beneficial partnerships and connections between the UK and countries globally to: enable research; internationalise HE institutions; strengthen systems; enhance student outcomes; and increase inclusion. These all contribute to stronger, more inclusive and globally connected tertiary education systems, which support economic and social growth, with the UK seen as a trusted partner and provider.

The Bangladesh Government is interested in strengthening and improving the standard of medical education in Bangladesh. Three key drivers are 1. Improving the quality of health training programmes to improve the quality and effectiveness of health professionals, 2. Building the numbers of health professionals (particularly nursing staff) trained to meet WHO guidelines on workforce density and UHC delivery, and 3. In future to be able provide qualified

¹ <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight/research-reports/tertiary-education-development>

health professionals (particularly nursing staff) to other countries interested in recruiting health personnel.

The UK government is interested in assisting Bangladesh to meet these goals and potentially recruiting Bangladeshi health professionals once local demand has been satisfied.

About the grant

The Grant aims to fund research study that will assess the quality and quantity of existing partnerships and exchanges in the medical education sector (both pre-service and in-service higher and further education, and training) and also conduct a labour market analysis through a Bangladesh medical education sector landscape survey.

Through this scheme, we aim to facilitate the production of research in the Official Development Assistance (ODA) context to benefit the international education sector.

The deadline to submit your research proposal is **17.00 GMT on Sunday 17 January 2021**. Applications should be returned to: David.maynard@britishcouncil.org

Purpose of the research

This research aims to:

1. Deepen our understanding of Bangladesh national policies, regulations, priorities and challenges regarding education partnerships and exchanges in the medical education sector through a Bangladesh medical education landscape survey.
2. Establish an evidence base of the range and depth of existing government-to-government, institution-to-institution links in the medical education sector between Bangladesh and the UK and other countries, and assess how these exchanges are supporting equity and inclusion in medical education, and helping to build the capacity and capability of the medical education sector in Bangladesh.
3. Identify of the stakeholders engaged in medical education – government, professional associations, (I)NGOs, private, local and international – and the roles they play
4. Identify strengths and weaknesses of the current medical education systems
5. Identify gaps in educational capacity and provide projections of when Bangladesh will be able to meet WHO workforce density guidelines and UHC metric if action is taken. ²
6. Identify gaps in standards/accreditation in nursing education with reference to the standards required in the UK
7. Identify further gaps which might hinder mobility of professionals to the UK, e.g. English Language

² [2020 WHO review of the code](#)
www.britishcouncil.org

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8. Provide a report with recommendations/a roadmap to improve Bangladeshi medical education systems to:
 - improve quality of medical education in Bangladesh
 - increase capacity medical education in Bangladesh
 - support drive to deliver universal health coverage
 - pave the road for eventual recruitment of nursing staff to the UK with suitable qualifications.

Eligibility guidelines and application process

Who may Apply?

Any person resident in the UK with an affiliation to a UK higher educational institution. The award agreement will be with the institution and not with an individual. Note: Although the applicant must be resident in the UK, the research may, in whole or in part, take place outside the UK or by persons not resident in the UK.

Different departments within a single institution can apply provided that the proposed activities are clearly different and that each is led by separate lead applicants (Principal Applicants).

What proposals are eligible?

1. We are looking for:
 - a) proposals from UK higher educational institutions (Lead Institution). A Principal Applicant will make the application on behalf of the Lead Institution.
 - b) proposals which include engagement of local HEIs in Bangladesh.
 - c) proposals which will engage Bangladesh affiliated education body or regional or international education organisation or consortium.
 - d) collaborative proposals (proposals from academic faculty from more than one university and/or proposals from a university and a third sector organisation).
2. The proposal must clearly demonstrate:
 - a) methodology and approach in designing and carrying out the baseline research
 - b) how data gathered will be used to craft recommendations on UK-Bangladesh partnerships initiatives including trilateral partnerships and which are expected to deliver societal and/or economic development outcomes in Bangladesh.
 - c) plan how to engage relevant UK and Bangladeshi stakeholders and potential participants/users/beneficiaries of the research in order to maximise the potential of this research project to have positive impact beyond the duration of the Grant
 - d) how the research and dissemination activities can be carried from **14 February 2021 to 13 February 2022**.

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3. Proposal should be able to outline how the research and its outputs respond to the purpose of the Grant including how it will contribute to understanding international education in ODA contexts.

Amount of Grant

The grant amounting to £100,000 is available for a UK HEI to carry out this research³. Annex 3 provides the concept note for the Bangladesh Medical Education Baseline Research Grant.

This is a **one-time grant to be awarded to a single UK institution**.

Funding will be agreed for a maximum initial period of twelve (12) months. The expected research output(s) in the final report must be in English.

Full value of the award will be paid upon completion of relevant checks and the signing of the contract.

In the event of any underspend of the Grant, this may be used for further activities under the Project subject to the British Council's prior approval and in accordance with the Standard Terms of Grant Agreement (Annex 4), in particular clause 5 of Schedule 3 (Change Control).

Ineligibility

- The research must not have already taken place or be underway.
- This Grant is not intended to fund the field work of Ph.D. candidates or similar.
- The proposal must make clear what expenditure items the award will fund (details are to be indicated in the Budget Form). The scheme will not fund items of equipment which institutions would normally be expected to possess (for example computing equipment including laptops). Nor will it fund conference or seminar attendance to disseminate findings unless specifically invited to do so by the British Council.

How to apply

To apply applicants must complete the following documents and send to David.maynard@britishcouncil.org by **17.00 GMT on Sunday 17 January 2021**.

1. Annex 1: Grant Application Form
2. Annex 2: Budget Form

Applicants are responsible for ensuring they complete the form fully and correctly.

³ We define research as original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding.

Selection Process

You will have your response evaluated as set out below:

Stage 1: A check will be made to ensure all required documents have been provided according to the specifications. Incomplete or incorrect submissions will be disqualified and not evaluated further.

Stage 2: The proposal will then be evaluated in accordance with the criteria and weightings set out below. If excluded at this point, they will not be evaluated further.

A British Council panel will evaluate the proposals against the following criteria:

- Research focus, methodology and approach (50%)
- Knowledge of the sector, professional experience, qualifications and competencies (30%)
- Value for money (20%)

All decisions of the panel will be final and binding. No correspondence will be entered into with the unsuccessful participants.

We reserve the right to contact applicants to request or negotiate an amendment to any aspect of the proposal, including for example budget items or project timeline, to best meet the objectives of the scheme.

Timeframe of the Grant

Activity	Date / time
Issuance of Call of Application	Friday 11 December 2020
Deadline for clarification questions (Clarification Deadline)	Thursday 17 December 2020
British Council to respond to clarification questions	Thursday 24 December 2020
Proposal submission deadline	Sunday 17 January 2021
Final Decision	Sunday 31 January 2021
Contract finalisation and signing	Thursday 11 February 2021
Contract execution and grant payment	Sunday 14 February 2021

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- Follow up/clarification questions can be submitted to David.maynard@britishcouncil.org
 - Any entry received after the closing date will not be considered.
 - The British Council accepts no responsibility whatsoever for any technical failure or malfunction or any other problem with any system, server, provider or otherwise that may result in any entry being lost, delayed or not properly registered.
 - The British Council will inform applicants as to whether the proposal is successful or not. The British Council is not obliged to enter into further discussions or offer advice on proposals. The decision of the British Council regarding the Grant is final.
 - The British Council accepts no responsibility for failure to notify successful applicants where such failure results from the provision of inaccurate contact details by the applicants or from the acts or omissions of any third party (including, without limitation, any internet or postal service provider) and shall have no liability to any applicant if it is prevented from or delayed in delivering any aspect of the opportunity by acts, events, omissions or accidents beyond its reasonable control.

Reporting requirements

- A reporting schedule must be included in your proposal. This should cover the following and include an indication of the proposed length of any written outputs:
- **Progress Report** - to be submitted to the British Council by **31 March 2021**.
- **Interim Report** – report on preliminary or initial finding is to be submitted to the British Council by **31 August 2021**.
- **Final Report** - to be submitted to the British Council at the end of your project. This would normally include rationale, methodology, findings, discussion and implications, and references.
- **Detailed Financial Report** - to be submitted to the British Council at the end of your project. Please note that in the event of underspend any re-allocation of funds under the Project must be formalised before the expiration of the Grant Agreement in accordance with the Change Control Clause (see Annex 3: Standard Terms of the Grant Agreement).

Project duration

The research must be undertaken from **14 February 2021 to 13 February 2022**. Funding will be transferred to the successful Lead Institution once the grant agreement is counter-signed by the British Council.

Formal project start dates will be set in the grant agreement by the British Council. Expenses incurred by the institutions prior to the effective start date, including any costs incurred in the production of the proposal, cannot be charged to the Grant.

Conditions of the award

- The successful institutions will own the intellectual property rights of the research output, including a final report of an agreed length, and will licence these rights to the British

Council to use and disseminate the research output / final report at its own discretion with no limitation on time or territory.

- The Lead Institution, partner local HEI(s), Principal Applicant and researchers must explicitly acknowledge the support of the British Council in any written or spoken dissemination of the research process and all outputs arising from it.
- Successful institutions must satisfy the British Council that the expenditure has been incurred in accordance with the original proposal by providing a detailed expenditure report.
- Institutions must agree to the terms and conditions of the scheme, which will be outlined in detail into the contract for successful applicants.
- Institutions must agree to the terms and conditions of the scheme, which will be outlined in detail in the contract for successful applicants. Please be advised that Annex 4: Standard Terms of the Grant Agreement is not final and will still be finalised with the winning institution.

Benefits of the award to the successful institution

- Financial support which enables the research to take place.
- Publication and dissemination of the research by the British Council (subject that the research is of appropriate quality) as an example of quality research from the UK with full acknowledgement of the researchers and their affiliated institutions.
- The right to refer to the research as funded by the British Council
- Support with access to appropriate government partners and higher education institutions overseas as agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- Opportunity to present a webinar through our website or online communities.
- Promotion of the report through British Council internal and external networks

Ethics and research governance

It is essential that all legal and professional codes of practice are followed in conducting work supported by this programme. Applicants must ensure the proposed activity will be carried out to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity. In the online application form, applicants must clearly articulate how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and how they will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the project commences and all risks are minimised.

We have a duty of care to safeguard the children and vulnerable adults we work with. Please refer to the Safeguarding policy here: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/how-we-work/policies/safeguarding>

Where proposals involve any contact with children, each organisation and individual will need to adhere to the relevant national requirements to ensure they have been fully vetted to work with under-18s. Please also refer to the Research Councils UK 'Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct' (<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc/>),

the Inter Academy Partnership report 'Doing Global Science: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise' (<http://www.interacademycouncil.net/24026/29429.aspx>) or contact us for further guidance.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Applicants are encouraged to ensure equal opportunities in the teams implementing their proposed activity. For the British Council's approach, see our Equality Policy at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/equality_policy_1.doc

Applicant screening

In order to comply with UK government legislation, the British Council may at any point during the application process carry out searches of relevant third-party screening databases to ensure that neither the applicant institutions nor any of the applicants' employees, partners, directors or shareholders are listed:

- as an individual or entity with whom national or supranational bodies have decreed organisations should not have financial dealings;
- as being wanted by Interpol or any national law enforcement body in connection with crime;
- as being subject to regulatory action by a national or international enforcement body;
- as being subject to export, trade or procurement controls or (in the case of an individual) as being disqualified from being a company director; and/or
- as being a heightened risk individual or organisation, or (in the case of an individual) a politically exposed person.

If the applicant or any other party is listed in a Screening Database for any of the reasons set out above, the British Council will assess the applicant as ineligible to apply for this grant call. The applicant must provide the British Council with all information reasonably requested by the British Council to complete the screening searches.

Personal data

The British Council will collect and store the names and email addresses of all applicants and the additional details of applicants as anticipated by the 'How to Apply' and 'Selection Process' sections above.

The British Council will use this personal data for the following purposes:

- managing the relationship between the applicants and the British Council;
- communicating with applicants to answer their queries about the opportunity;
- communicating with successful applicants
- administering and delivering the research grant

Where an applicant has consented to the British Council doing so, the British Council may contact the applicant using the personal data collected to provide information about the goods, services, courses or promotions that the British Council offers.

By participating in the opportunity, applicants consent to their personal data being processed by the British Council in accordance with, and for the purposes set out in, this section of these terms and conditions. The British Council complies with data protection law in the UK and laws in other countries that meet internationally accepted standards. You have the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold on you, and the right to ask us to correct any inaccuracies in that information. If you have concerns about how we have used your personal information, you also have the right to complain to a privacy regulator.