The Climate Connection – COP26 Higher Education Roundtable Series

MENA Higher Education Roundtable

Call for Delivery Partners

Guidelines for Applicants
August 2021 Version 0.1
The Climate Connection: COP 26 Higher Education Roundtable Series

Background

The UK will host the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow on 1 – 12 November 2021. This will be the largest international climate change summit the UK has hosted, bringing together over 30,000 participants - including heads of states, climate experts and campaigners - to agree coordinated action to tackle climate change.

In the lead up to the COP26 summit in November, the British Council is running a global cultural relations programme and campaign called ‘The Climate Connection’ to address the challenge of climate change. This initiative supports the UK Government’s ambitions for COP26 to be a ‘whole of society’ COP, and draws on our unique abilities to reach young people and hard-to-reach communities across the world.

The Climate Connection is a global programme and campaign designed and run by the British Council. Over the next six months, across our network of offices in over 100 countries, we will use the UK's cultural and educational resources to build awareness, share ideas, and empower young people to act on climate change. For further details see: https://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection

We will work to grow the number of international collaborations between British and overseas institutions to drive knowledge exchange, technological transfer, creativity and innovation in tackling climate challenges.

As part of the British Council’s Climate Connection programme we will present a series of five roundtables which will explore the role and contribution the higher education sector is making to the climate crisis. The Climate Connection – COP26 Higher Education Roundtable Series aims to engage with current debates in HE around sustainability, climate security and other themes pertinent to COP26

1. Context

The countries of the MENA region are among the biggest food importers in the world, making the region vulnerable to the impact of climate change on food and water security.

These nations greatly depend on imports for staple foods—most MENA countries import at least 50 per cent of the calories they consume. This has led to policy decisions over the years in which a focus on food self-sufficiency has been adopted, especially for water-intensive grains, but at the cost of sustainability given the region’s water scarcity.

It has long been clear that water and food security must be looked at in an integrated manner. The region’s increasing water scarcity is well known, as is the fact that agriculture is the largest consumer of water globally, accounting for around 70 per cent of annual water withdrawals. According to the World Bank, that number is 85 percent for many countries in the region. Indeed, in a world in which demand for food and water is
expected to increase 50 per cent by 2050 and global energy demand is set to double, others see the water, energy, and food nexus as the framework on which to build sustainable solutions. If the issues of water and food security are not sufficiently addressed, they will pose perilous environmental, economic and political challenges for the entire region.

2. Overview of the funding opportunity

This call is for a delivery partner to organise a virtual 1.5-hour Higher Education roundtable focused on the theme of food and water security in MENA which will be delivered in mid-October 2021 in the lead up to the COP 26.

The roundtable will examine the contribution the Higher Education sector is making to the climate debate, and what institutions can do to address the climate crisis through academic research which leads to innovations and by engaging with policy makers to support the process of evidence-based policymaking. The roundtable discussion will lead to a series of recommendations to help mitigate the impact of climate change on food and water security.

3. Thematic areas:

The roundtable will align with the COP26 priority action areas:

- Adaptation and resilience. ‘Helping people, economies and the environment adapt and prepare for the impacts of climate change.’
- Nature. ‘Safeguarding ecosystems, protecting natural habitats and keeping carbon out of the atmosphere.’
- Energy transition. ‘Seizing the massive opportunities of cheaper renewables and storage.’

4. Outcomes:

Through the roundtable applicants shall seek to:

- Engage Higher Education leaders and other key stakeholders from the UK with their peers in MENA with focus on Egypt, in a roundtable discussion about shared key challenges, to share experience and learning as well as to build trust and mutual understanding.
- Engage and include the next generation of Higher Education leaders, climate researchers and climate leaders in the dialogue, so that their voices are heard by the current leaders who are having to make momentous decisions which will impact the lives of generations to come.
- Develop enhanced understanding among current leaders about the concerns and anxieties of the next generation about the impact of climate change and how Higher Education Institutes should address it.
- A series of recommendations of actions that need to be taken to help mitigate its impact on climate change especially in relation to water and food security in MENA.
- Build mutually beneficial connections between the UK and MENA/Egypt Higher Education sectors.
5. Eligibility:

- Each proposal must name one Principal UK institution which will receive the grant on behalf of the roundtable team. The Principal institution will be responsible for disbursement of the grant to the proposal partners.
- Each proposal must name one Principal Applicant from the UK, who must be a Leading or Established Researcher.
- The geographical location of the applicants is not a concern provided that the applicants have a permanent or fixed term contract with a UK institution and the applicants are able to deliver the grant and activities within the given duration.
- Individual departments within a single institution can make multiple applications per call provided that the proposed activities are clearly different.
- The roundtable will have a Lead applicant who can be from Egypt or from any other MENA county, noting that the Principal applicant in charge of the grant disbursement must be from UK as the fund will be disbursed to a UK institute.

6. The Roundtable structure:

Panel participants:

The panel will comprise approximately eight participants plus a chair and a provocateur:

- One chair – not limited to the applicant organisation team.
- 2-3 climate researchers from Egypt, MENA and UK as panel speakers specialized in water and food.
- One provocateur – who will open the session by framing the issue to be discussed and will work with the Chair to review, filter and group the questions submitted by the audience. The provocateur will be under 35 years; they may be an academic or a science journalist, or another professional background with knowledge relevant to the theme of the roundtable.
- Senior Egyptian policy makers (invited through British Council Egypt Team)
  - Minister of Agriculture
  - Minister of Irrigation
  - Deputy Minister of Higher Education
- Senior UK speaker: COP26 Champion Nigel Topping (invited through British Council Egypt Team)

Delivery partner may identify other UK or Egypt/MENA policy makers on the panel in consultation with British Council Egypt team. Delivery partner is responsible for proper media coverage for roundtable both in Egypt & UK

- One rapporteur – an Early Career Researcher - who will produce a summary of the discussion and future actions the Higher Education sector should take.

Key audiences/stakeholders:

- Undergraduates and graduate students (from MENA and the UK)
- Early Career Researchers (from MENA and the UK)
- Environmental organisations
- Next generation of environmental leaders
- Educationalists with an interest in climate change
The audience will be asked to submit questions and comments on the resilience roundtable when they sign up to attend the event. These questions will help to scope the focus and direction of the dialogue.

The audience will also be able to post questions and comments which will be moderated and shared with the panel throughout the event.

The roundtable will produce a series of recommendations about how the higher education sector should respond to the water and food security issue.

**Note: This call is open to MENA countries not Egypt only and the UK lead applicant must make sure to have MENA representation with focus on Egypt**

**Role of the Principal Applicants:**

- Determine the roundtable title, shape the content/agenda of the roundtable, in consultation with the British Council.
- Identifying and securing the chair, provocateur, rapporteur and 2-3 climate researchers from Egypt, MENA and UK as panelists.
- Overseeing the production and delivery a report and summary of the event produced by the rapporteur in a format to be agreed with the British Council.
- Under this call for proposals, Principal Applicants will be responsible for all organisational aspects of the virtual roundtable logistics.
- Principal Applicants are responsible for submitting the application form along with a budget breakdown.
- The grant agreement will be signed by the UK Principal Applicant’s home institution which will be responsible for the management of the grant (including financial reporting).

**Role of British Council:**

- Work with the delivery partner to ensure that the theme and content of the roundtable is aligned with COP26 and the British Council’s Climate Connection.
- Secure senior policy-makers from MENA as panelists, plus a senior UK policy maker as a panellist.
- Provide the digital platform and technical support for the roundtable including briefing the panellists.
- Publicise the roundtable event through its networks.

**7. Location of the Roundtable**

The roundtable will be conducted virtually on Microsoft Teams or Zoom and the British Council Technical team will be responsible for managing the online platform.

**8. Duration of the Roundtable**

The roundtable will be 1.5 hours long and will be held at a time which is suitable for both the UK and MENA countries, to be agreed with the British Council.

**9. Timing of the Roundtable**

The roundtable should take place between 4 and 20 October 2021.
10. Language

Roundtable will be held in English. However, consideration should be given to non-native speakers for the roundtable to be inclusive. Advised, interpretation costs is covered under roundtable eligible costs (section 15).

11. Communication, promotion, and publicity

Principal Applicants are expected to plan the communication and promotion of the roundtable and share the results and outcomes of the roundtable with external parties where appropriate. The British Council’s guidelines on communication and branding are included in the grant agreement.

12. Funding

- Maximum British Council funding available for the roundtable is £3,500.
- Principal applicants and their institutions will be asked to submit receipts and invoices to demonstrate their spend upon completion. The documentation must be kept until 31 December 2029.
- Full checks of supporting documentation will be carried out on a proportion of the grants.
- Further monitoring and evaluation will also be carried out, to be specified in the grant agreement.
- Applicants are required to provide a budget request upon submission of their proposal.

13. Eligible Costs:

Funding will cover:
- Staff costs
- Administrative costs such as interpretation costs
- Communication costs including promotion and publicity.
- Technical costs for those who require internet data to attend the virtual roundtable

14. Payment of the grant

The grant for Roundtable will be paid in two payments:
- 75% within 30 days of signature of the Grant Agreement in September/ October 2021
- 25% by November 2021 post the delivery of the roundtable and the event report and summary, and on the condition of the approval by the British Council of a final report based on actual expenditure submitted by the Principal Applicants.
- The British Council reserve the rights to recover the full payment if the final report and supporting documents are not satisfactory, or the roundtable has not been delivered as planned, or the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement have not been adhered to.
- The roundtable Grant Agreement will be signed by and the grant paid to Principal Applicant. The institution which signs the Agreement will then be responsible for the management of the grant (including financial reporting).
15. **Underspend**

In cases where grantees have spent less than the budget awarded, the underspend cannot be used for further activity.

16. **Reporting**

- A final report must be submitted by principal Applicants within 30 days after the roundtable delivery.
- The report templates will be sent to successful applicants as part of the grant agreement and will include financial and narrative sections.
- A final policy paper shall be submitted by principal applicant to the British council that includes the recommendations of the roundtable and what can be done next.

17. **Relevance to economic development and social welfare (Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility)**

For the purpose of the MENA Roundtable, we define activities leading to impact with development relevance as activities that have the potential to contribute to the economic development and social welfare of low- and middle-income countries, benefitting low income and/or vulnerable populations in these countries.

The roundtable supports using the levers of higher education to encourage sustainable development, particularly in the fields of adaptation and resilience - Helping people, economies and the environment adapt and prepare for the impacts of climate change. safeguarding ecosystems, protecting natural habitats and keeping carbon out of the atmosphere and energy transition, and preparing economies and societies for the impacts of climate change and the necessities of responding to it.

The roundtables will contribute to the long-term economic development and welfare of priority countries on the DAC list by encouraging trends towards sustainable energy use, information and data sharing and shared values.

**ODA transparency and reporting**

As part of the UK government’s commitment to ODA transparency and in line with FCDO ODA reporting requirements, there is a requirement to publish information about ODA grants including project titles and summaries via the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) registry and via DFID’s national statistics.

The purpose of publishing information via the IATI registry is to make information about ODA easily accessible to governments, stakeholders and other relevant groups in beneficiary countries. All funded projects from this roundtable will be published in this way. Please therefore write your roundtable title and summary in such a way that they are meaningful and accessible to non-specialist audiences, following publication.

It is expected that the roundtable title and summary are written in plain English and avoid the use of jargon, acronyms, puns and plays on words. Please also make clear in the title of the roundtable and summary how it is ODA-compliant, for example by identifying the development challenge(s) being addressed, the aims of the roundtable and the beneficiary countries.
18. Gender Equality Statement

To comply with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, applicants must take meaningful yet proportionate consideration to ensure gender balance as well as ethnic and cultural diversity among participants is applied. And that policy dialogue panellists will be split between UK and non-UK participants.

19. Diversity

The British Council is committed to equal opportunities and diversity in all our activities. This includes avoidance of bias due to gender, disability, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or religious belief.

Principal Applicants are encouraged to work towards as equal a gender balance as possible and promote diversity and must ensure that no participants are excluded from joining the roundtable on the basis of ethnicity, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability.

20. How to apply

Applicants can apply Electronically only within the call duration until Sunday 5th of September 2021 at 23:59 Cairo time, through filling in all the application form (Here)

Any problems with the online submission system should be reported to the following email address: science.egypt@britishcouncil.org.eg

Please note that Once you submit your application, you will not be able to edit your application.

You can preview an offline version of the application form (Here)

Applicants must confirm on the online form that:

- They have obtained permission to submit the application on behalf of their institution.
- The lead institution is willing to receive the funds and to disburse funding to other partners, and to sign a grant agreement with the British Council.
- Complied with British Council policies on prevention of fraud, bribery, money laundering and addressed any other financial and reputational risk that may affect a transparent and fair grant award process. See: https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies/anti-fraud-and-corruption

21. Application assessment and notification of results

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility and quality criteria in Appendix 2 and 3. The British Council will inform Lead Applicants about the results via email in early-September 2021. Applicants should ensure the eligibility criteria are met as appeals are not allowed for this call. The British Council reserves the rights to reject any ineligible applications.
22. Selection process

- Selection begins with an eligibility check by the British Council against the eligibility criteria given in these Guidelines and the Eligibility Checklist at Appendix 2.
- Eligible roundtable proposals will be assessed by a panel from British Council Egypt.
- Roundtable proposals will be assessed by the review panel against the quality criteria in Appendix 3.
- Successful applicants will be notified in the week commencing 12 September 2021 after the call closes.

23. Call deadline

- The submission deadline is 23:59 Cairo time on 5 September 2021. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered for funding.
- The deadline applies to all parts of your application.
- Appeals against this decision will not be accepted.
- For important dates, please refer to Appendix 1.

24. Data protection

How we use your information:
The British Council will use the information that you provide for the purposes of processing your application, making any awards, monitoring and review of any grants. The British Council comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (EU) GDPR).

- We process and handle personal information according to these regulations. The personal information that you provide on this form will only be used for the processing of your application. The information will be viewed by British Council and those who are part of the decision-making process. Your information will not be used/shared beyond the partners listed above for any other purpose without your specific consent. British Council reserve the right to publish and share anonymized aggregated information with stakeholders.
- If you are among the successful participants of the MENA roundtable call for delivery partner, we will keep your contact details, for 7 years from the end of the roundtable, so that we can include you in future events and projects. For unsuccessful applicants we will keep your application details for a period of (1) year from the submission of your application to the MENA roundtable call for delivery partners.
- Organisation details, where collected, are used for monitoring and evaluation and statistical purposes. Gender information and country of origin, where collected, is used solely for statistical purposes.
- If we need to contact you, we will do so using the contact details you have provided.
- Under UK Data Protection law, 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 want more information about this, please contact your local British Council office on science.egypt@britishcouncil.org.eg

see our website: http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacycookies/data-protection
25. 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 nor any of the applicant’s employees, partners, directors, shareholders is 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) apolitically 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. Please read the text to this effect on the application form and tick the box to show that you understand this.

26. Contractual requirements

- The contracting authority is the British Council which includes any subsidiary companies and other organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council from time to time (see: https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status).
- The British Council is subject to the requirements of the UK Freedom of Information Act, (“FOIA”). Please indicate in your application whether FOIA also applies to your organisation, so that we can reflect this in the Grant Agreement should you be successful in your application.
- The British Council’s contractual approach in respect of the grant (Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement) (“Grant Agreement”) is set out here: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/grant_agreement_template.pdf.

By submitting a response to this call for applications, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of these guidelines and the Grant Agreement without further negotiation or amendment.

- In the event that you have any concerns or queries in relation to the Grant Agreement, you should submit a clarification request to science.egypt@britishcouncil.org.eg in accordance with the provisions of this call for applications by the application deadline. The British Council reserves the right not to make any changes to the Grant Agreement.
- □ The British Council is under no obligation to consider any clarifications / amendments to the Grant Agreement requested following the application deadline.
APPENDIX 1: Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announcement of the call</td>
<td>18 August 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Date</td>
<td>5 September 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23:59 Cairo Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applications assessment</td>
<td>September 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Successful candidates notified</td>
<td>Week 12 September 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract agreement signing and grant disbursement</td>
<td>September 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roundtable Date</td>
<td>from 4 to 20 October 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final report</td>
<td>Within 30 days of roundtable delivery</td>
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APPENDIX 2: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA CHECKLIST

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<tr>
<th>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA CHECKLIST</th>
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<tr>
<td>The application has been submitted by the applicant by the published deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>The application form is completed in full and complies with instructions given</td>
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<tr>
<td>The application form has been completed in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Only one application per Principal Applicant has been submitted (please note that there is no limit on the number of applications submitted per institution)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The roundtable will take place on from 4 to 20 October 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>The institutions where the Principal Applicants are based are recognised publicly funded research establishments or Higher Education Institutions (can include private universities);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicants must have the capacity to administer a grant and satisfy British Council requirements to prevent bribery, fraud and professional misconduct. Applicants will confirm that they comply with British Council requirements by responding to pre-submission questions in the online application form</td>
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APPENDIX 3: Scoring and selection Assessment criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcomes and impact</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suitability</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<th>points</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>Excellent</strong> – Overall the response demonstrates that the proposal meets all areas of the requirement and provides all of the evidence requested in the level of detail requested. This, therefore, is a detailed excellent response that meets all aspects of the requirement leaving no ambiguity as to whether the bidder can meet the requirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Good</strong> - overall the responses demonstrates that the applicant meets all areas of requirements and provides all of the areas of evidence requested but contains some trivial omissions in relation to the level of detail requested in terms of either the response or the evidence. This, therefore, is a good response that meets all aspects of the requirement with only a trivial level ambiguity due to the applicant’s failure to provide all information at the level of detail requested.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Adequate</strong>- overall the response demonstrates that the applicant meets all areas of requirements but not all of the areas of evidence requested has been provided, therefore there is an adequate response but with some limited ambiguity as to whether the applicant can meet the requirements due to the applicant’s failure to provide all evidence requested</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Poor</strong>- the response doesn't demonstrate that the applicant meets the requirements in one or more areas. This is there for a poor response with significant ambiguity as whether the applicant can meet the requirements due to the failure by the applicant to show that it meets one or more areas of the requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Unacceptable</strong>- the response is non-compliant with the requirements of the ITT and or no response has been provided</td>
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