

UKIERI - 4

Strand 3 – Building Research Capacities for undergraduate and masters students – Call Guidelines

November 2023

Schedule

S. Nu	Activities	Timelines
1.	Date of Advertisement for Call for Proposals	4 December 2023
2.	Last date for receipt of queries related to submission of Proposal	22 December 2023
3.	Last date for submission of applications	30 January 2024
4.	Date for Pre-call proposal Webinars & Workshops	Workshops between December 2023 and January 2024
5.	Date of result declaration on UKIERI website	28 February 2024

Disclaimer

This Call for Proposal is not an agreement and is neither an offer nor an invitation by UKIERI partners (the Authority) and the Ministry of Education to the prospective applicants or any other person. The purpose of this call for proposals is to provide interested parties with information to assist in the formulation of their application to this call for proposals (the "Application").

The Authority may in its absolute discretion, but without being under any obligation to do so, update, amend or supplement the information, assessment or assumptions contained in this call for proposals. The issue of this call for proposals does not imply that the Authority is bound to select and shortlist pre-qualified applications and reserves the right to reject all or any of the applications or bids without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

Background

About UKIERI

UKIERI is a multi-stakeholder partnership programme supported by the Governments of India and the UK. UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) started in April 2006 with the aim of enhancing educational linkages between India and the UK. Since then, UKIERI has been recognised as a key multi-stakeholder programme that has strengthened the research, leadership, education and skill sector relations between the two countries. It was the first of its kind at the time in international academic collaboration and its success led to the continuation of the programme for over a decade and a half.

About Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is a ministry of the Government of India, responsible for the implementation of the National Policy on Education. The ministry is further divided into two departments: the Department of School Education and Literacy, which deals with primary, secondary and higher secondary education, adult

education and literacy, and the Department of Higher Education, which deals with university level education, technical education, scholarships, etc.

About SPARC

Launched in 2018, the Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) is a unique initiative led by the Government of India. Keeping its promise of building a new vision and new approach to education, the Ministry of Education has initiated the creation of a new collaboration ecosystem through SPARC. The scheme facilitates academic and research collaborations between the top Indian Institutions and the top institutions in the world from 28 selected nations, UK being one of the significant partners. Unlike any of its predecessors, the SPARC encourages long-term contributions by foreign faculty to the Indian institutions as well as supports Indian students going abroad. Please visit <https://sparc.iitkgp.ac.in> for more details on SPARC. **The SPARC guidelines will be available from 11 December 2023.**

Phase of UKIERI

UKIERI Phase 1 (2006-2011) was set out to establish a framework that enabled a step change in the bilateral relationships between India and the UK on education and research.

UKIERI Phase 2 (2011-2016) focus was on leadership development, innovation partnerships, Skills development, and mobility with the aim of driving value through strategic and system-driven projects.

UKIERI Phase 3 (2016-2021) focus was on maximising impact aimed at promoting institutional and individual excellence in educational practices, research, and employability.

UKIERI Phase 4

UKIERI Phase 4 will catalyse high-quality, international collaborative research, bringing together wide-ranging disciplines such as STEM, behavioural sciences, anthropology and social sciences to take a 360-degree approach to solving the global challenges outlined in the UK and India's strategies. The programme will respond to the demand for enhanced research and innovation in both countries by supporting the mutual exchange of knowledge and ideas at the level of policymakers and system leaders, academics and researchers. Moreover, UKIERI 4 will contribute to building a high-quality pipeline of talented researchers in both countries by focusing on the development of early career researchers.

The primary beneficiaries of the programme will be the faculty and students in higher education and research institutions across both countries. All interventions to build capacity will be based on research that will map skills gaps and recommend evidence-based measures.

There are three strands of UKIERI 4

- Strand 1: Enhanced UK-India research to develop sustainable solutions to global challenges, through increased institutional research and mobility partnerships
- Strand 2: Women empowerment through Leadership Development programme for women in science and research

- Strand 3: Development of research capacities for undergraduate and master students through innovative new approaches to talent development, with a focus on inclusivity and multidisciplinary exchange.

Strand 3: Building Research Capacities for undergraduate and masters students

This strand aims to develop a programme to involve young researchers through micro-research grants for undergraduate and master students. Indian and UK Institutions will be encouraged to design a joint proposal tailored to the needs and interests of students, industry, and government partners. Selected Universities will be expected to select a cohort of 20 undergraduate/master students from disciplines related to **Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change** with equal student representation from India and the UK. The applicant is expected to develop the training module and thereafter run a 8-month joint training programme including up to 3-month face to face hands on training hosted at and by the partner institute. At the end of the programme, a joint dissemination conference to be held either in India or the UK.

The main objectives of this strand are

- Develop a pipeline of research capacity-building programme at undergraduate and master level.
- Develop a cohort of up to 150 students who would choose research career in green solutions, future telecommunication systems & networks
- Where possible, promote UK-India industry-academia engagement
- Provide pathways to career in research

Call Overview

The main objective of this call under strand 3 is to build stronger, more inclusive, industry-connected higher education systems that support global development impacts.

This strand is seeking joint proposals from HEIs for building research skills for **Energy, Sustainability and Climate Change**. These grants will be available to institutions to develop research careers for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

This strand aims to teach students how to do research and to help them acquire skills that they can use beyond the academic environment. The training curricula and approaches should promote inquiry-based learning, the project PIs and other senior researchers in the thematic area should act as mentors to the cohort, students should be encouraged to publish papers possibly in peer-reviewed journals, provide platforms and make efforts to promote student involvement in research-based activities. The key to success will be to mainstream research capacity building at undergraduate and postgraduate levels by integrating the training module developed as a part of the project into the main curricula. Stakeholders and respective authorities must invest in strengthening undergraduate and postgraduate involvement in research.

The application should mention thinking around leverage funding and funding sources for their proposals, this should be backed by financial and implementation plan. The sustainability of the project should be thought through beyond the UKIERI and SPARC funding.

Guidelines

The Guidelines for the UKIERI Research grants for undergraduate and master's students is divided in two sections. Applicants are requested to read both sections before filling the application form.

- **Section I: General Guidelines**
- **Section II: Specific Guidelines**
- **Section III: SPARC specific guidelines**

Section I: General Guidelines

UKIERI grants for building Research Capacities for undergraduate and masters students is expected to look at specific problem, taking a multidisciplinary approach. If the challenge is big for one university or a state-level institution to tackle, then consortia of universities or institutions could be brought together to ensure that there is a strong approach of combining excellence and strengths of all participating institutions. Social impact studies can be embedded within the projects but need to be quantitative or mixed methods in nature.

UKIERI funding is designed to support the collaborative costs of the joint research project(s). It is anticipated that a considerable portion of UKIERI funds may be used to support exchanges between the research teams in the two countries.

There are standard UKIERI or Ministry of Education rates for most elements that may be charged to the initiative and all applications must use these rates. Eligible costs include staff, researchers and research student exchanges, with extended periods of research attachments, essential to deliver the project's proposed outcomes. It should be noted however, that in line with promoting exchange between the participating research teams, all individuals spending time in the "other" country must be part of their home research team and spend the minimum required time with that team, and no more than the maximum allowable time in the other country.

Section II: Specific Guidelines

Eligibility

Applicants must jointly fill the online application form. The proposal must be a joint application with, at least one lead applicant based at a UK institution, one lead applicant based at an Indian institution. Both UK and the Indian partner should fulfil the SPARC eligibility criterion and its specific guidelines. Please refer to the SPARC specific eligibility criteria and guidelines in the given link

https://sparc.iitkgp.ac.in/scheme_details.php. **The SPARC specific eligibility and guidelines will be available from 11 December 2023.**

The application submitted must be endorsed by competent authorities in lead applicants' institutions from the UK and India. The same joint proposal to be submitted separately by the Indian and the UK Institution through the SPARC portal and the UKIERI website respectively.

For UK Institutions

- The Lead Applicant or PI (Principal Investigator) from UK institution must be a full-time teaching faculty or full-time employed in a research institution in UK.

- UK Lead Applicant should be an employee of a recognised UK university (<https://www.gov.uk/check-a-university-is-officially-recognised/recognised-bodies>) or not-for-profit UK research organisations and resident within the UK. EU citizens may apply provided they hold a permanent position in a UK institution. Non-EU citizens may apply provided they hold a permanent position at a UK institution for at least three consecutive years.
- Lead Applicants who have received grants from British Council or any other funding agency in previous years can submit further applications provided the proposed proposal is clearly distinct from the earlier one. Also, the proposed proposal should not already be funded through any other grant funded programme. In all cases, such assurance must be clearly articulated in the application form
- The applicants (both UK and India) should fulfil the SPARC eligibility criterion as per SPARC guidelines https://sparc.iitkgp.ac.in/scheme_details.php
- The UK applicant should submit the application form through the UKIERI website and share the relevant documents on the UKIERI mailbox.

For Indian Institutions

- Indian Lead Applicant or PI (Principal Investigator) should be a scientists/ faculty members working in regular capacity in universities, academic institutes and national research and development laboratories/ institutes.
- The Indian PI should not be retiring or leaving the parent institute during the proposed duration of the project.
- The Indian institute should fulfil the SPARC eligibility criterion
- The Indian applicant should submit the application through the SPARC portal

Duration and Value of Partnerships

UKIERI funds are available for partnerships of up to **March 2025** however, Indian HEIs have to follow the Ministry of Education funding guidelines. The start date for the project shall be considered from the date of signing of the contract and the completion date shall be considered as **20 March 2025**.

- UKIERI will provide a maximum funding of up to £ 50,000 for the project to the UK University lead applicant, subject to availability of funds and up to INR 50,00,000 for the project to the Indian University lead applicant, subject to availability of funds
- Lead applicant will be expected to strictly adhere to the project timelines as there is no flexibility for extension of the project timeline.
- The UKIERI awardees are eligible to apply provided they have successfully closed the previous project (including financial closure) awarded in the past.
- Quantum of funding for the project would be decided by the UKIERI secretariat. This will be based on activity plan and justification submitted by the lead partner(s) of participating institutions.
- The UK Lead Applicant will be funded by UKIERI whereas the Indian Lead Applicant will be funded by Ministry of Education in respective national currencies.

Pre-Proposal workshops & webinars

- Pre-proposal workshops will be delivered by the British Council during the application phase across India and the UK. Interested applicants could register for the workshops once they are announced as a Call for Workshop on UKIERI and British Council websites.
- Information Webinars would be delivered by the UKIERI team to support the participants during the application process.
- The applicants are requested to send the queries in advance at ukieri@britishcouncil.org or Henna.Jaireth@britishcouncil.org. The applications are advised not to make frequent enquiries about the result.

Submission of application

Application must be submitted online through [this link](#). The application needs to be submitted by the UK lead applicant through the UKIERI website and on the SPARC portal by the Indian partner. The application must be submitted online by **30 January 2024 23.55 UK time**.

The applicant shall provide all the information sought under this Call for Proposal. Applications that are received in the required format and complete in all respects shall only be shortlisted and subsequently evaluated. Please note that any application which is incomplete– including the omission of any signatures and dates shall not be shortlisted. Read guidelines in section II for filling-up the application form.

Only the application in response to this call for proposal shall be submitted. Lead applicant must submit only one application form. Lead applicant shall keep all the other team members/ partners of the project team informed about updates on the project. Any applicant, who submits or participates in more than one application, will be disqualified and will also cause the disqualification of the partnership of which it is a member.

Applications received after closing date will not be accepted.

Selection Process

There would be a three-stage process for selection of the research projects.

Stage One: Initial Screening

After the due date is over, short listing of application forms shall be done by UKIERI Secretariat and Ministry of Education . Under the below given conditions, the application forms shall be rejected:

- Application received after due date.
- Incomplete application.
- Application without endorsement from the respective institutes of India and the UK.

- Application without all attachments (Annexures would include Project Proposal and Financial Plans).

Stage Two: Evaluation by a panel of subject experts

All projects shortlisted at stage one shall be assessed by the sector assessment panel of Ministry of Education and UKIERI, which will include external assessors. The assessment panel will evaluate the projects as per published assessment criteria. A merit list will be prepared by the panel based on the evaluation criteria. The scores and comments received for each application will be analysed further by the UKIERI Steering Committee.

Stage Three: Final Selection and approval by the Steering Committee

An evaluation of the quality of the proposals, including the proposed budget, and of the capacity of the applicant and its partners, will be carried out as per the evaluation criteria. The final decision about selection of projects for grant support shall be made by the UKIERI Steering Committee comprising of members from the UK and Indian funding bodies.

Evaluation Criteria

Only those Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria shall qualify for evaluation under this Section. Applications of institutions who do not meet these criteria shall be rejected.

Proposals will be assessed based on competence and capability is proposed to be established by the following parameters:

Parameter	Weightage (%)
Operational capacity and relevance (to the specified themes)	15
Proposal specific criterion (objectives with clearly defined outcomes, social relevance, equity and gender etc. as applicable)	45
UKIERI specific criterion (sustainability, mutuality and complementarity of both India and UK)	20
Budget and cost effectiveness	20

Signing of Grant Agreements

The contract shall be signed between UKIERI and UK institutions for the selected project proposals.

Sanction letters would be issued by IIT Kharagpur for Indian institutions for the selected project proposals after the submission of requisite documents by project investigators.

Disbursal of Grants

- The UK institutions will receive the grant after signing of the contract, through British Council. The grant will be disbursed in two instalments, by March 2024 and July 2024/August 2024. British

Council will disburse 60% in first instalment and the remaining 40% of the grant in second and the final instalment

- Indian institutions will receive grant from MoE after completion of required documentation.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Each project will be jointly monitored by the UKIERI Secretariat and Ministry of Education
- The Lead Applicants shall submit bi-annual progress reports during the project period. Any discrepancy in the use of Grant or any other issue related to the project shall be communicated to UKIERI Secretariat and at the earliest.
- Joint report by the UK HEI should be submitted every 6 months to the UKIERI Secretariat clearly indicating the achievements made within 6 months of the report period against the indicators mentioned in the work plan.
- Joint report by the Indian HEI should be submitted every 3 months to Ministry of Education clearly indicating the achievements made within 3 months of the report period against the indicators mentioned in the work plan. At the end of the project, a closure report is to be submitted to Ministry of Education
- At the end of the project duration, a closure report is to be submitted by the UK HEI to the UKIERI Secretariat.
- UKIERI Secretariat and Ministry of Education have the right to withdraw the project if project implementation varies widely in relation to the proposal submitted against the call for proposal.

Gender Equality Statement

To comply with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, applications must outline how they have taken meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities in the Gender Equality Statement section of the application form. Gender Equality Statement Applicants are required to consider the impact their project will have on gender and provide a gender statement. It should not be a re-statement of your Institution's policy; you may refer to the policy but should show how the policy will be implemented in terms of the project.

Below are the project aspects that can be taken into consideration for the gender statement but not limited to.

- Outputs
- Outcomes
- Make-up of the project team; participants, stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project
- Processes followed throughout the programme.

The statement is part of the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) assessment criterion in this call. The following questions should be answered when writing the statement.

- Have measures been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different genders to be involved throughout the project? This includes the development of the project, the participants of the research and innovation, and the beneficiaries of the activities.

- The expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond.
- The impact on the relations between people of different genders and people of the same gender. For example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power, etc.
- How will any risks and unintended negative consequences on gender equality be avoided or mitigated against, and monitored?
- Are there any relevant outcomes and outputs being measured, with data disaggregated by age and gender (where disclosed)?

Not all questions will be applicable. If a question is not applicable, you will need to articulate the reasons why.

UKIERI & Ministry of Education reserve the right to reject the application if no consideration has been given to gender equality or if the proposal is assessed to result in a negative impact for gender equality.

Data protection

How we use your information:

The British Council will use the information that you provide to process your application, make any awards, monitoring and reviewing of any grants. The legal basis for processing your information is agreement with our terms and conditions of application (contract). We may share application data with the agency appointed by the Ministry of Education, Government of India and IIT Kharagpur in order to assist with the management of the application process. We may share data with agencies responsible for monitoring and evaluation as and when the agency is procured.

The British Council comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (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 staff 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 and agency appointed by Ministry of Education, Government of India reserve the right to publish and share anonymised aggregated information with stakeholders.

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 or the Data Protection Team inforgovernance@britishcouncil.org or see our website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection>. We will keep your information for a period of seven years after the project.

Intimation To Lead Applicants

All Applicants will be informed about selection or rejection by the UKIERI Secretariat and/or Ministry of Education

Contact and Queries

In the event that you have any concerns or queries you can send an email to the following:

- **British Council:**
ukieri@britishcouncil.org or Henna Jaireth at Henna.Jaireth@britishcouncil.org.
- **SPARC Support cell:** IIT Kharagpur support@sparc.iitkgp.ac.in
- **SPARC Coordinator Institute:** Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore
Prof. Rajesh Sundaresan rajeshs@iisc.ac.in

Application Preparation & Submission

About Application Form

There are 5 parts of the [Application Form](#) as given below. All parts of the Application shall be filled within the word limit mentioned against each point.

- PART A: Project summary
- PART B: Principal partners involved
- PART C: Project proposal
- PART D: Financial proposal
- PART E: UKIERI specific criteria
- PART F: Peer reviews

There is one Application form along with three annexures:

- Annexure I (Project Work Plan)
- Annexure II (Financial Proposal)
- Annexure III (Template for CV)

The forms and annexures shall be duly filled to avoid any ambiguity.

A user will have to create an account on the online tool and then fill and submit the application form.

Project Work Plan

Project Work Plan should be filled in detail with activities demarcated for each year separately along with its outcome and indicators. No modification shall be entertained after submission of the application form.

Financial Proposal

- Please summarise the estimated costs (£ Sterling) over the period of the project on an annual basis. Please assume the start date for project as **15 March 2024**.

- All travel and accommodation cost where applicable should normally be the most reasonably priced economy class. The scholars will abide by the national policy of the respective government about travel.
- Project specific institutional costs - up to 15% of the total project funding: Funds can be used to contribute for such needs. However, funds cannot be employed to meet the regular administrative costs or running costs of the institution.
- Any other costs to be met from UKIERI & MoE funds should be itemised.
- The following costs are not eligible under UKIERI:
 - debts and provisions for losses or debts
 - interest owed
 - items already financed in another framework
 - currency exchange losses
 - direct costs of staff time
 - administration or other overheads

Please use pounds sterling (GBP or £) as the unit of currency throughout the financial proposal, even though some costs will be incurred in (INR) Indian rupees for UK participants. Similarly, Indian participants use INR as the unit of currency in their proposal for the funds required from Ministry of Education. Please double check all amounts and calculations in this section, as it is an important part of the scoring of the proposal, and changes cannot be made after submission, nor will the UKIERI team or assessors check or recalculate on your behalf. Please summarise the estimated costs (£ sterling) over the period of the project on an annual basis.

Tuition fee may be charged to UKIERI for UK based research student and other institutional fees. However, it is anticipated that many participating institutions will include tuition fee as a significant part of their institutional contribution to UKIERI. Therefore, it is requested that the tuition fee shall be subsidised for the research students who will be part of the project

- UKIERI has indicative rates given below for allowances:

Indicative Allowances for Indian Research Team Members Travelling to the UK

- Monthly allowance for Research Staff and Fellows: £1700
- Monthly allowance for Research Students: £800
- Visas: For any number of visits up to 6 months duration each in any 6-month period: £150
- The receiving side will provide support to visiting side on finding best reasonable accommodation within institution or an external venue. The in-country cost to be borne by the host institution
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Indicative Allowances for UK Research Team Members Travelling to India

- Monthly allowance for Research Staff and Fellows: 2500 INR *30
- Monthly allowance for Research Students: 1000 INR *30
- Visas: For any number of visits up to 6 months duration each in any 6-month period: £80

- Receiving side will provide support to visiting side on finding best reasonable accommodation within institution or at an external venue. The in-country cost to be borne by the host institution

- Grants/ financial support from other sources shall also be specified explicitly in the Financial Proposal.
- The website of UKIERI may kindly be referred to for Frequently Asked Questions.
- Applicants, please check all the components of Application forms before submitting it.

No.	Particulars	Checklist (Yes/No)
1	Application Form is complete	
2	Work Plan is attached	
3	Financial Proposal is attached	
4	CVs of lead applicant from UK and India are attached	
5	The Lead Applicant is a full-time member of faculty	
6	The Lead Applicant holds a PhD degree or equivalent	
7	The UK institution is in the list of recognised institutions (refer link - https://www.gov.uk/check-a-university-is-officially-recognised/recognised-bodies) or is in the list of not-for-profit UK research organisations (refer link- http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/documents/eligibilityiros-pdf/)	
8	The UK Lead Applicant is resident within the UK / has held a position in a UK institution for at least three consecutive years	
9	The UK Lead Applicant is an EU citizen who holds a permanent position in a UK institution	
10	The proposal is endorsed by the respective institutions	