What is it the GCRF Engagement Fund?
The GCRF Engagement Fund provides funding to support activities to develop productive, sustainable relationships with collaborators and research users in the private, third, or public sector, with the primary aim of addressing specific development issues in our six focus countries of Botswana, Colombia, India, Mexico, South Africa and Sri Lanka.

The Engagement Fund will support activity that seeks to pump prime research, build relationships with research users or to generate impact.

These guidelines are for RESEARCH PUMP PRIMING activities only.
Up to £10,000 is available for activities which support future applications for research funding.

Aims of the fund
All projects funded by the GCRF Engagement Fund must be ODA compliant. GCRF funded activities must:

- Address a significant problem or development challenge, as described in the GCRF challenge areas [www.ukri.org/gcrf](http://www.ukri.org/gcrf) and UN Sustainable Development Goals [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs)
- Directly contribute to the sustainable and inclusive prosperity of people in developing countries, especially the six focus countries of Botswana, Colombia, India, Mexico, South Africa and Sri Lanka.
- Ensure the primary benefits of all activity accrue to developing countries (benefit accruing to non-developing countries is of secondary consideration).

All aspects of your application must be ODA compliant.

For more information on ODA compliance, please see the downloadable guide on the UoE GCRF webpages [https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/research-funding/gcrf-at-essex](https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/research-funding/gcrf-at-essex).

The fund will accept applications relating to developing countries other than the six focus countries, but only if they have a strong relevance to university strategic priorities.

**RESEARCH PUMP PRIMING**: The fund can be used to translate existing UoE research to new audience, test the application of theoretical knowledge or explore entirely new areas of research. To reflect the aims of the GCRF, all projects must include collaborators from the target countries, or countries that will benefit from the research in line with ODA requirements. These collaborations are expected to be equitable and sustainable partnerships.

Up to £10,000 is available for each project.

Selection criteria and eligibility
The fund is open to all UoE academic staff. ODA compliance is mandatory and applications which do not provide evidence of ODA compliance will not progress to evaluation. All successful applicants will be required to complete a report at the end of their activity to assist with the evaluation and reporting to Research England.

**RESEARCH PUMP PRIMING** evaluation criteria:

- Does the proposal have clear aims?
- Which country or countries will the activity take place?
- Have suitable research partners been identified, and is the partnership sufficiently ‘ready’ to be operationalised?
- Has the link to addressing a problem or development challenge been fully explained?
- What is the potential for high quality and appropriate scientific outcomes?
- What would be the likely reach and significance of the project, especially in relation to the problem or development challenge?
- What future joint research is likely to accrue from the collaboration?
Is the budget appropriate and justifiable and the timetable realistic?

Applicants should demonstrate that the ethical implications of their research have been considered, particularly in relation to human participants (including their data). Projects involving human participants will be subject to ethical approval.

**Reporting**

Each award will be subject to evaluation against these criteria and for ODA compliance. Project leads may be required to report on progress against agreed milestones during the award, but must submit a final report within a month of the end of the activity.

A project case study will be required for reporting and promotional purposes and Research and Enterprise Office (REO) staff will be available to assist in its production.

**Timetable**

Call opening dates and deadlines for applications can be found at [GCRF@Essex](https://www.gcrf-essex.ac.uk). We expect decisions to be made shortly after the decision Panel convenes. Projects should be completed, and all funding must be spent before the end of June 2020.

Application for activities that extend into the next academic year will be considered, but it must be clear in the budget and timetable how the activities and funding splits between the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years. No funding for 2020/21 can be guaranteed.

**Advice for the application**

1. Make sure you fully address the ODA compliance requirements. This is a mandatory requirement for all GCRF funding and applies to all activities for which you request funding. To answer the questions in section 7 (about ODA compliance) you may find you have to repeat information provided in other sections of the application.

2. If your project has been developed jointly with external partners please include them in the contacts list. Information about all collaborators – regardless of the nature of the connection – should be included in section 4.

3. Follow-up activities (section 5) relate to follow-up related to your project/event, for example further collaboration, publications or joint activities; longer-term strategy (section 6) should consider the broader and strategic context of your project for example impact case studies or funding applications.

4. Costs for UoE Research Assistants may be included at: Grade 7 for a postgraduate researcher; Grade 8 for a postdoctoral researcher. If you require salary costs please contact [gcrf@essex.ac.uk](mailto:gcrf@essex.ac.uk). Do not contact REO Pre-Award.

5. Ensure your budget is realistic and under £10,000. If your project requires more than £10,000 you should contact [gcrf@essex.ac.uk](mailto:gcrf@essex.ac.uk) first to see if it is worth making an application.

6. If your project involves funding being passed to another organisation to spend, you should submit, with the application, a completed Due Diligence Light-touch questionnaire.

7. You should take the risks and mitigations section seriously: it may include risks related to research, travel or which accrue only to those with whom you are collaborating. Please see the [GCRF relevant university policies](https://www.gcrf-essex.ac.uk/relevant-university-policies) section on our website.

8. Completed applications should be passed to your department’s Director of Impact/Research and Head of Department, who are asked to comment on the proposal and approve the application (an electronic signature is fine).

9. All applications should be submitted – in Word – via the [online application submission portal](https://qualtrics.com) on Qualtrics by the deadline.

If you have any queries please email [gcrf@essex.ac.uk](mailto:gcrf@essex.ac.uk).