

## Partnership Funding FAQs and Answers

Last updated: 1 February 2016 (updated text in red)

### Logistics and application process

*Q: I wasn't able to join the webinars, how can I find out what questions were asked and the answers to them?*

A: This document includes all of the key questions and answers from the two January webinars.

*Q: Can you help me find someone to collaborate with? Will REACH circulate a list of prospective bidders?*

A: We have created an online form for anyone to register their interest in collaborating with others on a funding proposal. Details of interested parties will be advertised on the REACH funding page and updated regularly.

*Q: Can we meet with someone on the REACH team to discuss our proposal ahead of the EOI deadline?*

A: The EOI materials available on our website outline what we are looking for. Unfortunately we cannot meet separately with interested individuals or organisations but you can send further questions to [reachfunding@water.ox.ac.uk](mailto:reachfunding@water.ox.ac.uk) until 10<sup>th</sup> February.

*Q: If I make statements in my application or reference statistics do I need to include sources?*

A: As the form is short and we don't want to add unnecessary burden to applicants, we would not expect an extensive list of references cited within an application. However it will be useful to cite where key evidence has come from to support your argument.

*Q: Can the partners which are part of a consortium select one partner to receive the funding, or will funding be distributed to different partners within the consortium?*

A: All of the funding directed to a consortium will be provided to a single entity. Your consortium must nominate a lead organisation which is responsible for the management of the funding provided. Which entity acts as the lead organisation is a decision for the consortium.

*Q: Can an organisation be part of more than one consortium responding to this call? Is there a limit to the number of EOIs an organisation can submit?*

A: An organisation can be part of more than one consortium (as lead or non-lead) responding to this REACH funding call. There is no limit to the number of EOIs. However, if an institution is involved in more than one successful application then, depending on the level of commitment in each, we may get in contact to ensure that organisation has sufficient capacity to take on the work associated with each application.

*Q: Does a partnership have to include a local REACH partner?*

A: No, applicants do not need to collaborate directly with a local REACH partner but the proposal does need to meet the overall REACH Programme objectives.

*Q: What are the applicable terms and conditions with regard to Intellectual Property?*

A: A key aim of the REACH Programme is to promote the sharing of knowledge and dissemination of research results and this will be reflected in the terms and conditions of the award contracts. Although Oxford reserves the right to determine ownership of results, materials and outputs (Materials) produced as part of activities funded by REACH on a case by case basis (taking into account, amongst other things, the nature of the proposed project and outputs), it is likely that the awardee will own the Materials produced as part of activities funded by Catalyst Grants. This will be subject to rights being reserved for Oxford and DfID, as the funder of the REACH

Programme, to use such Materials. Where the awardee does not own the Materials, the awardee will be given rights to use the Materials for academic and research purposes.

*Q: Do full details of the consortium have to be in place when I submit the application? We are in the process of identifying our research partner; can we wait until we have had a positive reply from the first round application and form the consortium then?*

*A: The quality of the project team will be evaluated as part of Criterion 4 so it is important to include all members. In particular, if the consortium partners have a role in the proposed project such that the outcomes depend on their participation, and if they would be in receipt of funding, then you do need to detail the consortium in the Expression of Interest.*

*Q: Are there restrictions regarding partners who are local or national NGOs or on any private sector organisations? Alternatively, are applications from certain sectors particularly encouraged?*

*A: Applications are encouraged from institutions which can fulfil the aims of the programme, including civil society organisations, research institutions, regional organisations, think tanks, governmental organisations and the private sector. The lead organisation will be required to complete the due diligence section of the application form providing assurances on behalf of any partners.*

*Q: In the guidance it is mentioned that a per diem cannot be covered by this funding, could you please clarify a bit more about this restriction? Could you also clarify the point that all budgets must not allocate more than 20% to indirect overheads?*

*A: Generally, the REACH programme does not allow per diem payments to be made and instead require expenditure to be reimbursed against receipts or invoices. Indirect costs, sometimes referred more generically to as 'overheads' are the type of costs which are necessary for underpinning project work but which cannot necessarily be allocated to individual projects. Such costs include computer facilities, insurance, central administrative support, office costs. However, a case may be made for per diems in exceptional circumstances, and the applicant should make reference to why this is necessary and how this would be practically managed (what rates would be used, what sort of records would be kept, if recipients would be made to sign on receipt of funds etc.).*

The non-payment of per diems and the 20% limit to indirect costs is to illustrate to DfID that due financial process is being followed by the REACH Programme and that we are meeting their stipulation to consider value for money with all expenditure.

*Q: I understand that if a consortium applies for funding, all the funding provided by REACH will go to the leading organisation. However, I see that in the budget summary we are asked to indicate the cost of each partner in the consortium. Is it possible to allocate all costs in the budget to the leading partner on the basis that this organisation will then subcontract the other partners (and potentially also some other experts) to perform the activities of the project?*

*A: For the purpose of the EOI, we would like to see an initial break down of how the funding will be allocated between partners. This will demonstrate to us how the project will be managed within the consortium. It will be possible to move the budget between budget lines and partners in the final budget, as long as the overall total remains within 10%.*

## **Funding available**

*Q: How many projects are you funding in this call?*

*A: The number of successful applications will depend on the quality of applicants and how much each project requires. However, we anticipate awarding between 5 and 15 projects for this first round subject to the quality of applications and funding requests. We expect to issue our second call for catalyst grants later this year.*

*Q: Would a proposed project be eligible to receive a Catalyst Grant if it has already received other funding?*

A: Yes, we encourage applicants to leverage other funding.

*Q: How does matched funding work with the £50k limit? If for example, I had 100% matched funding would I apply for £100k overall with £50k from REACH or is the overall limit £50K with the max REACH amount £25k?*

A: In the example above you could apply for £50k from REACH. We encourage applicants to leverage other funding to increase the pool of funds available for their project. However, please note that the Catalyst Grants are to fund work for up to one year.

*Q: Will there be options later for extending the one year Catalyst Grant, making the research work longer and more extensive?*

A: There may be an opportunity to apply for a Major Grant (up to £500k per grant over at least two years) to expand a successful Catalyst Grant. However, we expect each of the projects which are funded by Catalyst Grants to be self-contained and completed by the end of December 2017 at the latest. Major Grants will be via directed funding calls and will not have the broad scope of the Catalyst Grants.

*Q: How much money has the programme received from DfID?*

A: The REACH programme has a grant of £15m from DfID. Up to 30% of the grant can be allocated to open or directed funding to meet programme needs. We are planning a second round of Catalyst Grants later this year and there will be a Major Funding Grants call in 2017. The disbursement of funds will depend on the needs and priorities of the programme, guided by REACH's annual meetings with DfID.

*Q: Would the funding we receive be subject to VAT? Would the University of Oxford in this case be considered as subject to VAT?*

A: **As VAT is the responsibility of the recipient and not the funder, please consult with your local administrative and financial support on this issue. Each country is subject to varying taxation laws and it is therefore not possible for us to advise if payments we make would be deemed under local law as taxable.**

## **Eligibility**

*Q: I am an independent consultant, am I eligible to apply for funding?*

A: For an application to be successfully awarded a collaborator would need to submit a completed due diligence checklist (as outlined at the end of the EOI), and demonstrate that internal controls are in place which provide reasonable assurance that the use of resources is consistent with laws, regulations, and award terms; that they are able to safeguard resources against waste, loss, and misuse; and that they will obtain, maintain, and fairly disclose reliable data in reports. The due diligence checklist on the application form gives some indication as to the capacity that we would expect a candidate to demonstrate.

*Q: Am I eligible as a 'practitioner' to apply? How strict are your guidelines as to what constitutes "research"?*

A: This funding call encompasses research, research into action, and partnerships. Therefore it is open to practitioners providing the Programme objectives and eligibility criteria are met.

*Q: Can I apply for funding to do research as part of my PhD?*

A: While not strictly ruled out, it is unlikely that this will be appropriate in most situations as you need to demonstrate that you will be able to deliver results and outputs within one year, and the Intellectual Property (IP) arrangements may not suit your University's rules.

Q: *Are US-based non-profits eligible?*

A: Yes, US-based non-profits are eligible. There are no restrictions on the types of entities which we are seeking to fund or their location, provided they can meet our due diligence requirements and fulfil the objectives of the Programme.

Q: *Can public entities (such as public water utilities) lead on applications?*

A: There is no restriction and public water utilities can apply provided they address 'water security' and not solely focus on 'water services' (see guidance notes).

Q: *Does REACH have a preference for long-standing partnerships between researchers/development organizations, versus a consortium coming together for the first time?*

A: Providing the eligibility criteria are fulfilled by the consortium there is no preference of this kind

### **Geographical focus of the programme**

Q: *To what extent are you interested in filling gaps in water security thematic areas, as opposed to extending the regional reach of the programme?*

A: For this call, rather than just focusing on regional issues or specific countries, we are particularly looking at novel approaches and how to develop the Programme further. We would welcome applications that contribute towards one or both of these.

Q: *Is there a restricted list of countries that work must be carried out in? Is there a preference for proposals in the three countries where observatories are being established or in the region/countries described?*

A: Proposed work to be covered by the funding must fit the REACH Programme objectives and be relevant to the countries which the UK's Department for International Development identifies as 'fragile states' (please see page 6 of the guidance note), particularly in Africa and South Asia. If you are not working in one of those countries, then in order to be eligible for funding you will need to demonstrate that your work and its expected outputs are relevant to at least one of these states.

Q: *Is there a preference regarding the geographic distribution of grants awarded?*

A: No, we do not have a strong preference regarding the geographic distribution of the grants awarded. Our key priority is to promote innovation in line with the objectives of the programme. As indicated, the regional focus is in Africa and South Asia, and we do aim to extend the regional reach of the programme, particularly within South Asia.

Q: *Is there a preference for multi-country applications?*

A: No, there is not a preference for multi-country applications.

### **Research objectives and themes**

Q: *Is work on the Water-Food-Energy Nexus too far removed from the call's focus and water security?*

A: It is very relevant to water security so, broadly speaking, it is applicable. However, an application would need to demonstrate how it relates to the REACH Programme and specifically the poor.

*Q: Regarding the three themes for the catalyst grants, is it correct that the second theme might be more suited to academia and the other theme to civil society?*

A: We encourage applications from a range of organisations for each of the three themes.

*Q: To what extent can research be in pilot phase?*

A: Within the programme we are looking to encompass research, research into action, and partnerships. The key limitation here is that the eligibility criteria are met.

*Q: Can the funding be used to coordinate partners or create events designed to understand gaps in the literature?*

A: Yes, there is a mechanism to create partnerships in order to identify gaps. If this were proposed, we would look at what the outputs would be from these meetings and how they would impact the current state of play.

*Q: How can we find out more about what REACH's core research is?*

A: Key information is contained in the guidance note and on the website. The country diagnostic reports are a good further resource and are also available on the website.

*Q: What are the areas of gender and water security is REACH interested in?*

A: We are seeking to promote gender inclusive water security. The diagnostic reports provide some additional information regarding gaps in gender related water security research.

*Q: The documents indicate that the objective is to ensure water security for 5 million poor people by 2022. Are there any criteria to identify this group (e.g. income/ vulnerability etc.)?*

A: Defining poverty in order to evaluate its interrelationships with water security is a focus of research in the REACH programme. Therefore, we do not have set criteria to identify this group. We welcome funding applications from projects which can contribute to the programme in this regard.