Sussex International Development Challenge Fund (IDCF)

Background:
Research England has received further funding from the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology's International Science Partnership Fund (ISPF) totalling £25.9M in financial year 2023-2024 and £21.1M in 2024-2025. Universities that participated in REF2021 and that are Office for Students approved providers are eligible to receive the ISPF Institutional Support Grant which must be used on activities that are Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) compliant as defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)[1].

Purpose of the scheme:
The aim of this internal call is to support collaborative ODA compliant research activities that specifically address challenges faced by developing countries. To be ODA compliant, all funded activity must have the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries on the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list as its main objective[2]. However, please note that DSIT has specified that this funding cannot be used to deliver activities within, in partnership with, or that otherwise benefit China.

UK ODA funding is governed by the International Development Act 2002[3] and the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014[4] which requires that aid must be "likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender". Therefore, activities funded through this call must adhere to this legislation.

To meet the criteria for funding, proposed activity should**:**

- Be underpinned by research excellence,
- Be focussed on problems faced by ODA/DAC countries and developing pathways to their solution,
- Have a high likelihood of positive impact on the economic development and welfare needs of developing countries,
- Promote strong, enduring, and equitable partnerships between Sussex and DAC country academic communities. Where possible, partners in developing countries should play a significant role in the research activity.

Eligible activities and funding:
Applications are welcome from all disciplines.

[1] Official development assistance – definition and coverage - OECD
[2] DAC List of ODA Recipients - OECD
[3] International Development Act 2002 (legislation.gov.uk)
[4] International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)

Funding can be used to develop new ODA compliant research, add new strands to already existing ODA compliant activity, and/or repurpose unsuccessful but positively reviewed ODA compliant external funding applications to any sponsor.

We envisage funding projects and activity across a range of size and scope. As such, applicants can request funding for projects from between £5k to £50k. Funds can be requested for your DAC country partner(s) and should be clearly indicated in section 6 of the application. The amount of funding you can request for DAC partner(s) is not capped however all budget elements must be clearly justified.

The following types of activity and costs are eligible:

1. **Pump-priming challenge led activities:** this may include exploratory network meetings and pump-priming to identify what the research contribution to the DAC country challenge is and to develop sustainable strategies, partnerships, and projects to generate preliminary data. The outcomes of pump-priming activity should inform more substantive ODA compliant research. For instance, eligible funds would include directly incurred costs only, such as research & technical assistance, recruitment costs, consumables, travel and subsistence, fieldwork, survey costs, and project specific workshops. Please note that applicants can request funds for project-specific equipment, however a strong justification is needed in section 6b of the application.

2. **Capacity and capability building:** activities can involve establishing or enhancing sustainable and equitable partnerships with DAC list countries, growing people-based capacity and capability to undertake ODA compliant research in developing countries and the UK. This means travel to and from DAC countries, including hosting researchers from DAC countries at Sussex. Funds can cover travel, subsistence, visas, a stipend, and any applicable School bench fees.

3. **Generating impact from research:** translational activity which interprets and uses findings for sustainable social and economic benefits of DAC countries and partners organisations, e.g. stakeholder engagement, broader dissemination etc. Funds can cover research assistance, r disseac.

Projects can run for a maximum of 11 months (depending on the start date) however all projects must end, and spend funds, by 31 March 2025.
Outcomes will be known in April 2024 after which recruitment, due diligence and contractual arrangements will be arranged in advance of projects starting.

Applicant eligibility:

Applications are welcome from academics and research staff from all disciplines.
Cross-School collaboration is strongly encouraged.

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Further information:
If you would like to discuss your application please contact Debbie Foy, D.Foy@sussex.ac.uk

All costing queries should be directed to Catherine Peck, Catherine.Peck@sussex.ac.uk

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