



RCUK – CONFAP RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS CALL FOR PROJECTS

Research Councils UK (RCUK) (<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/>) and the Brazilian Council of State Funding Agencies (CONFAP) (www.confap.org.br; <http://confap.org.br/news/en/presentation/>) are pleased to invite applications for the Newton Fund RCUK-CONFAP Research Partnerships call. The aim of this call is to provide flexible short-term support for small-scale research and networking activities, with the objective of establishing sustainable collaborations between UK and Brazilian researchers that will lead to excellent research (i.e. developing new knowledge that cannot be achieved through existing international collaborations).

The [Newton Fund](#) is a new initiative intended to develop the long-term sustainable growth and welfare of the partner country through building research and innovation capacity, and forms part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment. This call aims to build relationships between the UK and Brazil and applications must specifically address poverty alleviation or development issues. More detail is provided under the 'Eligibility' section below.

Applications that address the following areas are particularly welcomed:

- Health
- Urban transformations
- Food energy water environment nexus
- Biodiversity ecosystems and resilience
- Economic development and welfare reform

Applications across all research areas are also eligible, as long as they make a strong case for UK-Brazil collaboration and are ODA compliant. Recognising the multidisciplinary nature of the highlight areas, the development of interdisciplinary collaborations is particularly welcome

Further information on the highlight areas is included in Appendix I.

The awards will be up to 12 months in duration and funded to a maximum of £50k (direct costs only at 100%) by RCUK with support for matched effort from CONFAP. (See 'Eligible Costs' section for details).

The deadline for receipt of applications is **17 October 2014 at 16:00 hrs UK time/12:00 hrs Brazil time**. Successful grants will be announced in **December 2014** with start dates no later than 1 January 2015.

A single, joint application should be developed by the Brazilian and UK applicants using the application form available to download from the call page at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/international/newton/confap/>.

The form must be completed by both applicants and sent to international@rcuk.ac.uk (for UK applicants) and to fundonewton@confap.org.br (for Brazilian applicants) by the call deadline.

Objectives

To provide flexible short-term support for small-scale joint research and networking activities that are exploratory in nature. The longer term objective is to establish sustainable collaborations between UK and Brazilian researchers that will increase the competitiveness of these researchers in gaining funds for excellent research in future funding calls, either under the Newton Fund or through other routes.

RCUK and CONFAP have identified the following areas for UK-Brazil research collaboration:

- Health
- Urban transformations
- Food energy water nexus
- Biodiversity ecosystems and resilience
- Economic development and welfare reform

Further information on the highlight areas is included in Appendix I.

Eligibility

The lead UK applicant must be a RCUK award holder i.e. currently in receipt of research funding from one of the UK Research Councils or Research Council-funded Institutes, Units or Centres. The Brazilian lead applicant must be from a State whose FAP has signed up to the NEWTON FUND-CONFAP Memorandum of Understanding.

The AHRC exceptionally allows Principal Investigators who do not have a current award but have been in receipt of an AHRC award in the last 5 years (from application deadline).

The ESRC recognises that in some of the areas identified above it does not presently have a large portfolio of current awards. Therefore, exceptionally the ESRC will consider proposals from UK based applicants currently not in receipt of research funding from one of the UK Research Councils. In such cases the proposals must be from applicants located in a research group or cluster, in an institution eligible for ESRC funding, with a significant portfolio of externally funded research within the broad theme of the application. The ESRC will also accept applications from UK based previous award holders and named co-investigators under our Pathfinders, Rising Powers and ESRC/DFID Poverty Alleviation initiatives.

The applicant's associated grant **must** have started before the application deadline.

The application to RCUK **must** state the grant reference which gives evidence of the lead PI's eligibility to apply or, where applicants are based in a Research Council Centre, the name of the project.

The presence of a Research Council funded studentship award does **not** confer eligibility for these awards.

Applications may include Co-Investigators from across several institutions both within the UK and Brazil.

The Newton Fund requires that the funding be awarded in a manner that fits with Official Development Assistance (ODA) guidelines. All applications under this call must therefore be compliant with these guidelines. The collaborative project could be addressing development goals of relevance to the partner country, in which case the partnership should seek balanced participation, or otherwise may be focused on capacity building in areas of Brazilian need.

Eligible costs

The maximum budget for the UK side of the collaboration is £50,000 direct costs only. The FAP involved will make an equivalent contribution for Brazil-based researchers. It is envisaged that applications will be for a balanced partnership, with equivalent resource commitment from both funders,

but applicants should justify clearly all financial requests.

Funds can be used for travel, subsistence and other networking or collaborative activities, such as workshops, summer schools and exchanges (in either direction: from and to the UK). Funds can also be used to support direct research costs; funding for staff time will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Application process and assessment criteria

Applicants should submit a joint proposal using the official application form available at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/international/newton/confap/>

The form must be completed by both applicants and sent to international@rcuk.ac.uk (for UK applicants) and to fundonewton@confap.org.br (for Brazilian applicants) by the call deadline.

Applications to this call will be assessed by both CONFAP and RCUK through a joint review process. Final decisions will be made jointly between RCUK and CONFAP.

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Scientific merit of the proposal
- Added value to applicants' ongoing research programme(s)
- Demonstration of the need for and added value of the partnership between UK and Brazil based applicants
- Potential to deliver longer term benefit and impact
- The uniqueness of the opportunity and expertise of the partners
- The opportunities for development of capacity and expertise
- The strategic relevance of the partnership to the Newton Fund

Terms and conditions

Grants will be awarded under standard UK Research Council Terms and Conditions.

Contacts

For further information, UK applicants should contact: international@rcuk.ac.uk

Brazil-based applicants should contact: aci@fapemig.br or duvidasfundonewton-faperj2014@faperj.br for applicants from the State of Rio de Janeiro.

Please note that further guidance for applicants, including information on ODA compliance for UK applicants, will be made available together with the application form from 18 August 2014.

APPENDIX I

RCUK-CONFAP HIGHLIGHT AREAS

- Health
- Urban transformations
- Food energy water environment nexus
- Biodiversity ecosystems and resilience
- Economic development and welfare reform

HEALTH

Global health research is a major focus for the UK and the overarching objective of this research is to support work that addresses the inequalities in health, particularly where they arise in developing countries. The changing burdens of disease across the world bring new opportunities for global health research to benefit health in the UK and in Brazil. We welcome applications addressing health issues of particular relevance to the Brazilian population. As is consistent with the overarching ambitions of the Newton Fund, we would like to support health research in disease areas which impact the poorest and most vulnerable in society, including indigenous and rural populations, the elderly, and women and children living in poverty. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, infectious diseases (including neglected tropical diseases), nutrition, child and maternal health and ageing, and non-communicable disease. We welcome applications from across the research spectrum, from basic medical research to health interventions and health systems.

URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS

Major changes are taking place in cities across the globe, both in developing countries and in the developed world. The majority of people now live in urban areas and the urban population in developing countries will cross 50% by 2030. Urban transformations are increasingly seen as the causes and potential solutions of broader economic, cultural and environmental change.

The concepts and concerns associated with Urban Transformation are global – even though experience of them is diverse. Urban conditions in developing countries are extremely varied and shape governmental institutions and capacity. Some are experiencing rapid population expansion in high growth environments, while others are growing but not creating economic opportunities. Other cities are expanding both physically, and with increasingly diverse populations, but experience conflict and violence. Many cities lack effective governance and genuine community and citizen engagement. Strengthening city government will be crucial for growth, inclusion and prosperity, to address critical policy issues and strengthen political legitimacy. Cities are places with a strong historical legacy where people live and work. This rapid change in infrastructure, landscape and demography and the associated technical and environmental challenges are enormous.

A research perspective is vital for understanding the impact and significance of these transformations for the welfare and wellbeing of urban citizens across the globe. These transformations are producing or reframing existing problems and generating complex opportunities and challenges for policy makers, practitioners and communities themselves. The increasing resurgence of policy interest in cities offers a major opportunity for research to generate fresh evidence, shape debates and to devise solutions for major urban challenges in the UK and internationally.

Therefore, we welcome applications for Research Partnerships between Brazilian and UK researchers in order to develop new international collaborations to contribute new knowledge and evidence on these major urban policy challenges. It is expected that Research Partnerships supported under this call will establish links with appropriate projects supported under the current call between the [FAPESP-ESRC-NWO on Sustainable Urban Development](#).

FOOD ENERGY WATER ENVIRONMENT NEXUS

The 'nexus' is a way of thinking about the interdependencies, tensions and trade-offs between essential ecosystem services such as food, water and energy, in the wider context of land use, environmental change and health and wellbeing. These different systems are inextricably linked, and improvements in one sector can have adverse impacts in another. The nexus requires a deep understanding of multi-functional landscapes and ways to manage the environment sustainably for multiple ecosystem services. It is underpinned by a number of cross-cutting areas, for example: valuing nature; sustainable prosperity and the green economy; sustainable behaviour across supply chains; health and nutrition; resource efficiency; sustainable intensification; forecasting extreme weather; and climate-resilient agriculture. For example, how can agriculture produce more using less land, water and energy, whilst reducing waste and maintaining other ecosystem services and the natural capital on which it and they depend? The nexus requires interconnected thinking across the natural and social sciences, and between researchers, policy, business and civil society.

Areas of interest for the UK include:

- Re-envisaging growth for a sustainable future; resilience and societal transformations; consumption, behaviour and socio-cultural change; public policy shaping, framing and learning; governance arrangements for sustainable resource use; and new data methods, skills and approaches.
- Sustainable, resilient and efficient food and non-food production systems supplying not only sufficient, affordable, nutritious and safe food, but also non-food products and feedstocks, while mitigating impacts on the environment and taking into account the need for multi-functional landscapes.
- Understanding how the processes of natural variability and manmade change work – as a whole Earth system, from global to local scale, from millions of years past to the present and into the future; developing whole-system knowledge to inform responsible management of the environment for multiple benefits.
- Understanding how environmental processes (physical, chemical and biological processes that interact in land, water and air) control resource* availability and how we can use resources responsibly; developing this knowledge to help use and recycle resources safely and efficiently, to live within the Earth's limits, and to steward natural resources for future generations.

* (food, water, energy, minerals and other essential services we get from nature such as ecosystem services)

BIODIVERSITY ECOSYSTEMS AND RESILIENCE

There is increasing pressure on the environment both from human impact and from changing climate, and at a time where sustainable development is a key priority globally, there are many competing demands on the environment. There is a need to ensure that ecosystem management contributes to poverty alleviation as well as to inclusive and sustainable growth and the associated challenges need to be addressed using experience across disciplines as well across national boundaries. Working with Brazil on this agenda brings huge opportunity, with the rich, valuable and diverse ecosystems and at the same time continued economic growth resulting in change in resource and land use. Areas of interest include:

- understanding how the processes of natural variability and manmade change work as a whole Earth system across time and geographies, developing whole system knowledge to inform responsible management of the environment for multiple benefits;
- understanding how environmental processes (physical, chemical and biological interacting in land, water and air) control resource availability and how we can use resources responsibly; developing this knowledge to help use and recycle resources safely and efficiently, to live within ecosystem limits, and to steward natural resources for future generations

- Impacts on ecosystems can be gradual and longer term or can be as a result of catastrophic and sudden events, often unpredictable in nature. Developing policy and action to help better prepare for such events, mitigating the impacts and also responding effectively, is also a key area of interest. This includes:
- Understanding the processes that create natural and man-made hazards (for example, extreme weather, space weather, pollution, novel diseases and invasive species), so that we are better equipped to manage vulnerability, risk, response and recovery; working with partners to use this science to make people, business and infrastructure more resilient to environmental hazards and emergencies.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE REFORM

Economic growth is often assumed to be one of the most important means to reduce poverty in the developing world – it creates jobs and opportunities for poor people to support their families and build more sustainable futures. However, the impact of economic growth on the poor in developing countries is complex and contentious. Growth and development are not synonymous, and inequality can be a barrier for growth, which has to be sustainable, sustained and inclusive to deliver the best outcomes.

Many developing countries face particular challenges that make it difficult for them to stimulate and sustain economic growth. These challenges include weak institutions, high unemployment, and poor infrastructure, a lack of access to financial services and unsuitable laws and regulations. Sustainable development requires sound foundations, universal access to education and health services, access to financial services, new technologies and affordable bank loans, gender equality and more equal distribution of resources can all support economic development. A stable and predictable operating environment is a prerequisite for private sector investment. Good governance should be promoted and corruption tackled at all levels in both private and public sectors.

While Brazil has moved up the ranks of the world's largest economies while making economic growth ever more inclusive, the challenge now for Brazil is how to create the conditions that will allow further improvements to living standards and sustain reductions in income inequality. Sustainable future growth will also require responsible use of environmental resources, particularly renewables. Also while Brazil is geographically, politically, economically and culturally different from many developing countries, there are also potentially positive and negative lessons which can be learnt from Brazil's economic growth for other developing countries and their efforts to promote economic growth, while at the same time reduce poverty and inequality and enhance the well-being of their citizens.

Therefore, we welcome applications for Research Partnerships between Brazilian and UK social scientists in order to develop new international collaborations which will consider how Brazil can continue to create the conditions that will allow further improvements to living standards and sustain reductions in income inequality and also proposals which consider what lessons can be learnt from Brazil's economic development for other developing countries.