



## *Researcher Links Programme*

### Newton Fund Introductory Brief

The Newton Fund is a £375 million fund (£75 million a year for 5 years starting 2014/15). Through the Newton Fund, the UK will use its strength in research and innovation to **promote the economic development and social welfare of partner countries**. By working together on bi-lateral and multi-lateral programmes with a research and innovation focus, the UK will **build strong, sustainable, systemic relationships** with partner countries. This will support the **continued excellence** of the UK research base and innovation ecosystem and **act as a golden key** to unlock opportunities for wider collaboration and trade.

The Fund will cover three broad categories of activity:

- (i) **People**: capacity building, people exchange and joint centres;
- (ii) **Programmes**: research collaborations on development topics; and
- (iii) **Translation**: innovation partnerships.

It will support projects across the agreed priority areas. These are likely to include:

- joint research on development topics;
- student and researcher fellowships and mobility schemes;
- challenge funds to develop innovative solutions on topics of interest to developing nations;
- science and innovation capacity building.

### About the Researcher Links Programme

International researcher mobility has been shown to have a beneficial effect on research productivity. Mobility opportunities can develop human capital and act as a gateway for promising researchers to build up valuable international contacts and networks. The Researcher Links programme aims to stimulate initial links between, and support capacity building among, 'rising star' early career researchers in partner countries and the UK. It brings in more senior researchers to act as mentors and to share their knowledge and expertise with more junior researchers. It can be seen as a first step on the funding ladder for collaborative research and the growth of excellence, focussing on broadening horizons and building trust.

The programme will extend the British Council's Researcher Links initiative which is currently run together with national partners across several countries worldwide. It is designed to be a coherent global capacity building and mobility programme with flexibility to

ensure that it can be adapted to country needs. The programme is coordinated centrally in the UK, but the country-specific priority areas, guidelines and national selection process are flexible and developed together with national co-funding partners, in order to respond to different country contexts and priorities.

The programme will:

- Offer opportunities for mobility of early career researchers between the UK and partner countries, enabling them to forge partnerships for future collaboration
- Support capacity building of early career researchers, through bilateral workshops led by senior researchers which enable knowledge exchange and career development as well as a broader appreciation of international opportunities
- Through these mechanisms the programme will support advancement in research areas that have a direct and long-term impact on the economic development and social welfare of the partner country, or in areas with the potential to develop human capacity in-country (including through up-skilling partner country researchers in areas which could contribute to jobs creation).

## Researcher Links initiative in partnership with Thailand Research Fund

This initiative between British Council and the Thailand Research Fund will utilize the common ground of a shared research area to provide opportunities for early career researchers from the UK and Thailand to form sustainable collaborations that build mutuality and trust over the longer term.

The Researcher Links programme consists of 2 components: workshops and travel grants for research visits, with a focus on early career researchers.

- **The Researcher Links: WORKSHOP**

This element of Researcher Links is designed to provide financial support to bring together the UK – Thailand bilateral cohort of early career researchers to take part in a workshop focusing on building up capacities of early career researchers, establishing new international research links, and supporting international development based on the proposal's objectives.

- **The Researcher Links: TRAVEL GRANT**

This element of Researcher Links is designed to provide financial support for early career researchers to spend up to three months in Thailand in the Researcher Links initiative with a view to enhancing and strengthening links for future collaboration, building research capacity in developing economies, and enhancing the researchers' career opportunities.

## Contact:

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