

# Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) and Official Development Assistance (ODA)

The Global Challenges Research Fund is classed as Official Development Assistance (ODA). As such, benefits to the UK are likely to be the secondary consideration and will not lead to a project being funded if it does not primarily deliver the development objective. The fund will provide opportunities for excellent research with economic or societal impact but must in all cases meet the ODA eligibility criteria.

ODA compliant activity promotes the long-term sustainable growth of countries on the [OECD Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) List](#) and is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.

ODA compliant research is defined by the OECD as:

***“research directly and primarily relevant to the problems of developing countries. This includes research into tropical diseases and developing crops designed for developing country conditions. The costs may still be counted as ODA if the research is carried out in a developed country.”***

Further useful details can be found in - [Is it ODA?](#)

There are guidelines to ODA eligibility but slight differences in context and detail within applications will impact on the assessment of whether an activity or project would or would not be ODA eligible. Therefore when trying to decide whether an activity is ODA eligible, it is important to focus on the questions which would typically be asked by the OECD. More detailed guidance will be provided in relevant call specification documents.

Questions to consider when writing your proposal regarding ODA eligibility include:

- Is the project addressing the economic development and welfare of an ODA eligible country?
- Is there a development need that my project or activity is addressing?
- Are the countries involved on the [DAC List of ODA Recipients](#) (the Development Assistant Committee of the OECD) *or* will countries on the DAC list directly benefit from the research?
- Is my activity credible or is there evidence of the need?
- Would this project or activity be applied in an ODA eligible country – when, how and with whom?
- What would the impact of my project or activity be, and who would benefit?
- How does my project or activity contribute to sustainable development?
- What would success for this activity look like?
- How would success or impact be measured?

These questions may be usefully applied both to a potential new research activity and a knowledge exchange activity building on existing engineering/physical sciences research at the university. Any benefit to the UK or other developed countries has to be the secondary consideration and should not lead to a project being funded if it doesn't primarily deliver the development objective.

Applicants should ensure they have considered existing advice on ODA eligibility. Any queries about the ODA eligibility of projects should be raised with either, the Social Sciences Division Research and

Impact Support team at [esrc\\_gcrf@socsci.ox.ac.uk](mailto:esrc_gcrf@socsci.ox.ac.uk), or directly with the ESRC contact named in the call specification document before submitting an application.

For more details about ODA see *Is it ODA1?*

RCUK describe ODA compliant research as those whose primary aim is to:

- Promote the welfare and economic development of a country or countries on the DAC list of ODA recipients
- Designed to address a development need, and
- Focus on developing country problems

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/international/gcrfodaguidance-pdf/>

All UK aid spending for international development is scrutinised by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) which contributes to the accountability of UK ODA spend by examining whether it is delivering value for money, and it is spent effectively for those who need it most.

<http://icai.independent.gov.uk/>

---

<sup>1</sup> ODA is defined as those flows to countries and territories on the DAC list and to multilateral development institutions which are

1. Provided by official agencies, incl. state and local governments, or by their executive agencies
2. Each transaction of which is
  - A. administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective and
  - B. is concessional in character and conveys a grant element of at least 25% (discounted at a rate of 10%)

NB

- All GCRF awards have to comply with 1. And 2B.
- Applicants need to ensure that 2A. is met by the proposal and the resultant activity.