ESRC-DFID Joint Scheme for Research on International Development (Poverty Alleviation)

Phase 2
Specification of second call for applications

Deadline for applications: 16:00 UK time on 30th September 2010

1. Strategic aim of the scheme and summary of funding opportunity

1.1 The Department for International Development (DFID) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) jointly fund a scheme for international development research. The purpose of the scheme is to provide a more robust conceptual and empirical basis for development and to enhance the quality and impact of social science research which contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs[1]). The scheme will fund world class scientific research on issues relating to economic, social and political development in less developed countries with the potential for impact on policy and practice for poverty reduction. Applications to the scheme may be for basic or more applied research topics. It is important that all research funded demonstrates effective demand from, and practical relevance to decision makers and practitioners in the field.

1.2 This second phase of the joint scheme has a total budget of £23 million and will consist of three annual calls for proposals. **We anticipate spending £7m on this second call of the second phase, but will consider allocating additional funds if there are sufficient proposals of exceptional quality to warrant extending the budget.**

1.3 **Applications are invited for projects with a FEC value of between £100,000 and £500,000** (Full Economic Cost – see sections 3.2 to 3.4 below for explanation of FEC). Applications over £500,000 **will not** be accepted under this call.

2. Scope of Scheme

World Class Research

2.1 The second phase of funding for the joint scheme retains the overall 'poverty alleviation' theme from the first phase, and applications under this broad heading are welcome. However, ESRC and DFID have identified three thematic areas for this call where work will be of particular interest. These areas are:

- Population and Development;
- Development in a Changing World: the challenge for theory, policy and action;
- Inequality and Development

1 More information on the MDGs can be found at www.dfid.gov.uk/Global-Issues/Millennium-Development-Goals

Detailed information on each of the thematic highlights identified for this call can be found at section 2.9 below.

2.2 Proposals addressing the interaction between these questions/areas will be welcomed, as will applications which challenge existing policy or practice assumptions.

2.3 Applicants should check that their intended project does not duplicate one of those already funded in previous calls. Details of the successful awards are available on the ESRC website:
Phase 1 awards:
http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/international/esrcdfid/46awards.aspx
Phase 2 awards:
http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/international/esrcdfid/Awards_Announcement.aspx

2.4 The scheme provides an opportunity for the international academic community to construct the **most appropriate** and **innovative** research to provide a more robust evidence-base for decision-making. The imperative is to combine the best social science research with a clear exposition of its eventual relevance to, and potential impact on, both international and national efforts to alleviate poverty.[2]

2.5 Applications are sought from across the social sciences. Recognising that poverty is a multi-dimensional problem, multi- or inter-disciplinary research projects are encouraged, although this is not a pre-requisite for funding. The aim is to bring the best social science, and where relevant other scientific disciplines, to bear on the issue of poverty alleviation.

2.6 Where proposals draw from the wider sciences, the social sciences should represent more than 50% of the research focus and effort. Interpretation of this limit is not prescribed, but a test of 'reasonableness' will be exercised through peer review. The overall contribution of the social sciences, in terms of the deployment of social science theory, concepts and methodologies, will provide the basis for the 'reasonableness' test. The aim is to avoid artificial boundaries that inhibit research within and across disciplines. If applicants have any concerns or doubts they should consult the scheme secretariat in the ESRC Office (see below).

2.7 Generic research challenges that may be addressed include but are not limited to:

- understanding and creating the socio-economic conditions that are necessary to facilitate the alleviation of poverty;
- new theoretical and conceptual thinking about the nature of development;
- new theoretical and conceptual thinking about the conditions under which development and poverty alleviation can be delivered;

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2 Projects may have the potential to shed light on the context and conditions for research uptake across different settings.

- methodological challenges posed by international comparative work in different social, economic and cultural settings;
- paucity of datasets, especially micro-level or longitudinal data.

2.8 The scheme will NOT fund contract research or consultancy work where the results and physical outputs are to some extent already pre-defined and known.

Thematic Highlights

2.9 The following section is a guide to applicants on the context of the three thematic highlights and provides examples, but not an exclusive list, of the sorts of work that the Scheme would be looking to fund under this call.

2.9.1 **Population and Development**

The world's population is expected to increase to 9 billion by 2050, with the population of the fifty poorest countries projected to more than double to reach 1.7 billion (UNFPA)[3]. This population growth will be highly concentrated amongst the poorest populations in urban areas. UN Population predictions are contingent on projected declines in fertility in less developed countries, since if fertility levels were to remain as they are, the total global population would reach 11 billion. Similarly, the population projections depend on sustained progress in HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention.

Age structure, household size, growth and spatial distribution of population are all critical factors for understanding how population will impact on development in different local, national and regional contexts. The UN Population Division projects[4] that the number of people in the world aged over 60 will be 1.9 billion in 2050 (almost triple 2005 levels), 80 percent of whom will live in developing countries. However, whilst developing countries are seeing a rapid increase in the proportion of older people, the current age structure in the least developed countries also shows a 'youth bulge', with children under 15 constituting 40 percent of their population, and young people aged 15-24 accounting for a further 20 percent. The number of people of working age (25-59) in developing countries is as high as it has ever been, and will continue to rise to a projected 3.6 billion in 2050. There is significant variation between countries in the developing world, with some countries still experiencing high levels of population growth (particularly in Africa) and others experiencing much lower levels of population growth. Some countries have reached a 'fertility plateau', whilst still at relatively high levels of population growth. Some developing countries are experiencing a 'demographic dividend' where a rise in the share of working age people within the population leads to a rise in the rate of economic growth, whilst others have yet to reach this window of opportunity.

Since 2008 more than half of the world's population has lived in cities, and there has been a very rapid growth of populations in poor urban slums. Many of these

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[3] http://www.unfpa.org/pds/poverty.html

[4] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2009). *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision, Highlights, Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP.210.* http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp2008/pdf/WPP2008_Highlights.pdf; http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp2008/pdf/WPP2008_PressRelease.pdf

populations lack access to essential services, including family planning and safe abortion. Particular concern surrounds the lack of access to family planning and reproductive health services for sexually active adolescents and 'youth' (15-24 years) whether they are married or unmarried. Population growth, density and distribution have significant impacts on the environment, putting intense pressures on natural resources and local ecosystems. The rapid and unplanned growth of cities, fed partly by migrants from rural areas, has created multiple environmental stresses.

Demographic pressures are also at play in the rural areas, where, in combination with other factors such as land expropriation, intergenerational land fragmentation, and the expansion of commercial agriculture and consequent reduced need for labour, the majority of the rural poor have become increasingly concentrated on land of poor quality. Migration (between countries), temporary or permanent, whether driven by the search for better social and economic opportunities, or as refugees fleeing war, genocide, persecution or natural disasters, is another important element. The links maintained between migrants and their countries of origin can create flows of financial capital (in the form of remittances) or social, technological or human capital which contribute to poverty reduction and development in the home country.

Gender inequality shapes the relationship between population dynamics and development, including fertility choices, migration, and investment in services to ensure that all women can enjoy their reproductive rights. The reproductive economy, (ie. the unpaid economy in homes and communities in which people are cared for by family members and friends and neighbours – primarily women and girls) is an important issue related to the ageing of the population and to pandemics like HIV/AIDS.

This raises a number of intellectual and policy challenges which include:

- What are the economic, social and cultural implications of the projected demographic changes? How do they relate to development concerns?
- What is the relationship between population dynamics and the achievement of the MDGs?
- How does the interaction between socio-economic and demographic dynamics affect poverty trends?
- What implications do these population dynamics and demographic concerns have for the provision of critical public services and infrastructure in specific developing countries? What trade-offs do countries face when making investment decisions? What investments will have the greatest impact on poverty and development outcomes – education, agriculture, health, trade, infrastructure?
- There is an emerging consensus that investments in reproductive health, education and gender equality reduce poverty. What are the factors that make for effective developmental interventions in this sphere? How can women be empowered to formulate and act on their own choices with respect to fertility?
- How can countries plan adequately to provide for their older citizens whilst also accommodating the needs of children and young people? How can

unpaid care for older people and for children and young people be recognised, reduced and redistributed?

- What are the most promising institutional and policy contexts which will allow countries approaching demographic transition to maximise their potential demographic dividend? What are the best means of employment creation for developing countries, and how will the global financial crisis impact on this?
- How will demographic trends in developing countries impact on key global issues like environmental change, resource scarcity and competition, conflict and insecurity? Long term forecasts suggest that food insecurity and water insecurity will persist and worsen over time.
- How can population issues be better integrated into development planning and policy-making?
- How can we better understand, and address, inequities in demographic outcomes?

2.9.2 Development in a changing world: the challenge for theory, policy and action

The next ten to twenty years will see significant challenges to many of the core assumptions on which current development theory, policy and practice is based. New thinking and evidence is required to enable us to prepare to understand a rapidly changing context for development, and to inform innovation in development policy and practice.

Since 2000, the Millennium Development Goals have provided a powerful organising framework for development policy internationally and a strong underpinning for the organisation of international aid.[5] Policy makers in developing countries have used the MDGs in different ways to inform national development efforts. Some countries have actively used the MDG framework, even extending it to include additional priorities. In others, the MDGs have been near invisible in national policy and planning processes.[6] In looking ahead to 2015, how should the international aid framework change to secure continued international support for development, whilst enabling states and citizens in developing countries to define and take responsibility for their own development?

The ascendance of *new centres of power* is a key factor in shaping the future of development. The rise of Brazil, India and China is bringing with it new ideas about the paradigms and principles that should underpin development, as well as new forms of investment and aid. *Large businesses and wealthy philanthropists* are also able to exert considerable leverage on aspects of global policy and individual country development[7].

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[5] Manning R (2009) 'Using Indicators to Encourage Development: lessons from the Millennium Development Goals', Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, February.

[6] Fukada-Parr S (2008) 'Are the MDGs priority in development strategies?: only a few of them are'. Working Paper 48, International Poverty Centre, UNDP, Brasilia, http://www.ipc-undp.org/pub/IPCWorkingPaper48.pdf,

[7] Witte M. and R Marten (2008) 'Transforming development?: the role of philanthropic foundations in International Cooperation', Global Public Policy Institute, Working Paper 10, Berlin;

At the same time, the patterns of development need are becoming increasingly *differentiated.* A significant number of countries have graduated from low-income status, driven in some cases by broad based growth, but particularly in some historically extremely poor countries, such as Congo and Sudan, in part by booms in natural commodities. The challenge for development, and in particular for aid, in these environments is significantly different from those in environments with limited natural resources and growing marginalisation from the global economy, such as the Sahel. This suggests the need for a more differentiated set of objectives and instruments for development than we currently have.

A further challenge will be the reshaping of development and of aid by climate change, climate change financing, and by trade flows which will dwarf official development assistance.

The above list of drivers of new concepts of development and the new contexts in which it will emerge is not definitive. There will, of course be other drivers some of which are not yet clear. Defining these will be as much part of the challenge, as will be refinement in understanding of those trends of which there is already a high degree of awareness.

These various challenges may converge to challenge existing concepts of development. Historically, the goal of development has been framed in terms of poverty and human development outcomes, and within the confines of the nation state. In the future, other criteria may come to the fore – security, mitigation of climate change, well-being, participation. What are the implications in terms of how development policy gets made and implemented?

These trends may also challenge the purpose of aid and the mechanisms through which it is delivered. For example, the redistributive purpose of aid assumes that the primary obstacle to development is the lack of resources that necessitates a transfer of resources from North to South. This assumption is challenged by the above trends, which suggest that politics as well as economics, determine poverty, and that resource flows are likely to become more complex and multi-directional.

This raises a number of intellectual and policy challenges which include:

- How will development be defined by different actors in low income countries, emerging powers and among Western democracies in the next ten to twenty years?
- What measures of development progress will be most appropriate?
- Will the role of aid be redefined and become more highly differentiated, demanding greater innovation in terms of instruments?
- What other trends are likely to influence development thinking and practice?
- How are the trends affecting development likely to interact and effect change?

2.9.3 Inequality and development

Inequality presents a severe challenge to poverty reduction, the achievement of the MDGs and global development based on social justice and equal opportunity.[8] It is also a critical constraint to human capital accumulation[9] and inclusive growth;[10] as well as to human and state security. The potentially destabilising effects of social exclusion and inequality are considered a threat to democracy and stability, with a potential to result in conflict.[11&12]

In global terms, the magnitude of the problem of inequality is immense: ten percent of adults, globally, own 85 percent of global household wealth whilst the bottom half collectively owns barely 1 percent. Growth is essential for poverty reduction but its impact is diluted where inequality remains high. Even in periods of vibrant growth, poverty levels may stagnate or rise amongst excluded groups, even whilst falling overall. China and Latin America provide compelling examples of increases in inequality juxtaposed with increased growth and general decreases in poverty.

Social science research has already generated evidence around the extent and causes of persistent inequality between and within countries. We know that inequality has economic, social, political and cultural dimensions and that certain groups are persistently excluded from the growth process and service delivery mechanisms through drivers such as ethnicity, gender, age, caste, disability or location.

Inequality includes comparisons at a personal level, an intra-household level, an inter-household level, a group level and/or between different types of actors (state/citizen, formal/informal institutions, etc.) not only in terms of income and opportunity but in terms of the power held by different types of actors. Therefore, in terms of measurement, inequality cannot only be about purchasing power but also about broader measures of human welfare.

In terms of policy the latest research suggests that the potential for many developing countries to re-distribute wealth via the tax system are limited.[13] Policy prescriptions, where they exist, have therefore tended to focus on specifically targeting excluded groups. It is important to move beyond this narrow targeting and to examine the structures and relationships that drive inequality and to construct ways to tackle these at a higher level. This includes looking at the structure and operation of labour and property markets that underpin inequality and the structure of rights that govern the use of resources.

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8 International Poverty Centre (2007) *The Challenge of Inequality. Poverty in Focus*, IPC, Brazil, (p13).

9 Birdsall, N., (1997) 'Asset Inequality Does Matter'. IDB Working Paper, IDB, Washington DC.

10 *World Bank Commission on Growth and Development, (2010) Post-Crisis Growth in Developing Countries: A Special Report of the Commission on Growth and Development on the Implications of the 2008 Financial Crisis.* World Bank, Washington DC, p34.

11 IDB, (2008) *Outsiders? The changing face of social exclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean.* Washington DC, p172.

12 Stewart, F., (2005) 'Social exclusion and conflict: analysis and policy implications'. Report prepared for DFID: London.

13 Ravallion, M., (2010) 'World Bank Policy Research Paper 5046'. This suggests that for most, but not all, countries with annual consumption per capita under $2,000 (at 2005 purchasing power parity), the required tax burdens required for effective redistribution are found to be prohibitive.

We need more evidence not only on the status of the poor but on the relationships between poverty and inequality in order to understand the full impact upon development outcomes. It is also important to look at the political dimensions of inequality including the interaction between inequality and the social contract.

This raises a number of intellectual and policy challenges which include:

- How has the current global crisis impacted on inequality both between and within countries? Have existing trends persisted or have things changed? Answering this will involve innovative data collation on economic, social, political and cultural aspects of inequality at an individual level as well as for households and social groups.
- Linked to this, what are the limits of current metrics for measuring inequality and how can they be improved?
- What are the barriers to economic, political and community participation and how do subjective aspects of poverty such as well-being, shame, fear, and humiliation interact with the broader drivers of inequality such as gender, ethnicity, disability, location, caste and age? Do these different drivers of inequality produce different development outcomes? Are some more intractable than others? If so, why?
- The research on OECD countries showcased in the book *The Spirit Level*[14] correlates income inequality with numerous negative outcomes not only for the poor, but for the population as a whole. Is this the same in developing countries? More broadly, how does inequality affect, and what is its relationship with, a variety of development issues - such as health/education/political participation/growth/human rights? Are all these areas equally affected?
- What do we know - and need to know - about the dynamics of choice for the most disadvantaged citizens when responsibility for decision-making lies with communities, civil society or the private sector?
- What do we know about the distribution of wealth and the factors that influence this? What does the evidence tell us about the rich and powerful, and their ability to preserve unequal structures?
- What does existing experience tell us about the role of government in ensuring that the most disadvantaged citizens improve their economic, social and political position in relation to other citizens? Is government responsible for regulation, for implementing programmes, for motivating the private sector and for civil society programmes? What are the implications for the choices available to the most disadvantaged citizens?
- How are the structures of property and labour rights operating to underpin inequality? What difference do different forms of regulation of labour and property make in terms of reducing inequality, including both individual and collective exercise of rights?
- What is the appropriate balance and relative effectiveness of actions/service delivery by the state, civil society, private sector, communities and donors in the face of persistent inequality? How effective are these different actors at addressing inequality? How does this vary in fragile and conflict affected areas?

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[14] Wilkinson, R. and Pickett, K. (2010) *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better.* Penguin.

- What policies exist to tackle political exclusion effectively including the exclusion of women?
- How can natural resources be managed in such a way as to contribute to reducing rather than increasing inequality? How does the lack of resources impact on conflict and radicalisation?

Research Capacity

2.10 Both the ESRC and DFID recognise three key aspects of capacity development: (i) building the research capacity of individuals; (ii) building organisational capacity (e.g. management, financial, communications); and (iii) institutional capacity building (e.g. the incentive structures, the political and regulatory context and the resource base in which research is undertaken and used by policy makers). Capacity to undertake and maximise the impact of research depends on a combination of human capacity, the availability of research resources (including data) and the political and incentive context for policy and decision-making.

2.11 DFID and the ESRC are not seeking through this scheme to fund capacity-building per se. Both sponsors fund capacity building activities through other mechanisms. However, it is understood that capacity issues may be addressed as part of the research process itself. The sponsors will therefore consider proposals that identify capacity building activities as part of, and not separate to, the stated research approach. This might include research studentships or new datasets or new models for maximising research impact. Good examples of capacity building in currently funded projects include: co-design of research and implementation; field based research methods training for developing country partner staff; opportunities for developing country partner staff to co-author journal and conference papers and participate in national and international conferences.

2.12 Capacity building elements should be set out in relation to the core intellectual agenda of the research proposal and not treated separately. The objective is to focus on the quality and impact of the research with flexibility on how improvements in research capacity might contribute to this.

2.13 This scheme does **not** provide support for standalone doctoral students. Any support for standalone doctoral research should be sought from alternative sources. However, 'Linked Doctoral Students' may be included in research applications from established and qualified research teams. Linked Students must be registered for their degree at a UK University recognised by ESRC for PhD training. For details please see:

http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/postgraduate/eligibleoutlets/.

Applicants should note that a studentship is not displacement for the normal research support required on the grant. Linked studentships are designed to add value to the proposed research outlined in the application, whilst providing a clear opportunity for a **distinct and independent course of enquiry** for the student. Through being embedded with a high quality research team, they should offer the student an opportunity to both develop their substantive research skills, alongside broader professional development.

The research conducted by a doctoral student must represent a discrete piece of work which is clearly of a standard to be submitted as a doctoral thesis, but the synergy and added value with the main research project also needs to be demonstrated. Applicants who are considering including a doctoral studentship in their proposed research project must refer to the document **'How to include a doctoral student on a project'** on the Scheme call web page.

2.14 Doctoral students from any country may be included in project applications as long as they are registered for their degree at a UK University recognised by ESRC for PhD training. Non-UK institutions may contribute to the supervision of a PhD student included on a proposal, provided they can demonstrate an appropriate research environment and infrastructure for doctoral work and robust supervisory provision. The student may spend a reasonable period (but not normally more than half) of their studentship at the Non-UK institution. It is the responsibility of the UK Research Organisation to ensure that the student is receiving appropriate standards of supervision and training during any time spent outside the UK, and that the PhD thesis is submitted on time.

International Dimension and Partnership/Collaboration relationships

2.15 By definition this scheme is concerned with international cooperation to address issues of global importance. Underpinning the scheme and all projects funded through it, must be a strong research ethic based on mutual respect and understanding for different cultural, ethnic, social and economic beliefs and practices. Solutions to poverty must be rooted in, and acceptable to, the institutions, communities and societies where they will operate.

2.16 The geographical focus for research projects should be determined by their relevance to the main aim of this scheme, namely research that supports the alleviation of poverty amongst the poorest countries and peoples of the world. For the purposes of the scheme there is no prescribed list of what constitutes the 'poorest countries and peoples'. Rather, the intent is to provide researchers with the flexibility to undertake any form of empirical, comparative or theoretical work that will yield insights into what works or does not work in terms of poverty alleviation and development. This may involve research on the poorest sections of society in middle income countries where there are high levels of income inequality. It is essential that the choice of research questions and the geographical focus are intellectually coherent and methodologically sound, especially where cross-cultural comparative work is proposed.

2.17 Formal partnerships and collaborators in the research process are not a pre-requisite for support under the scheme. Sole applicants are acceptable and may be based in any country (subject to eligibility requirements explained in section 4 below). The intellectual challenge should be the determining factor when configuring appropriate partnerships and collaborations. For those that wish to, the scheme enables academics from developing and developed countries to work together in any configuration of their choosing. The commissioning panel will assess the proportionality and balance of the roles and responsibilities of the partners and collaborators.

2.18 The sponsors also expect non-academic stakeholders, including potential end users and intermediary organisations with a mandate to communicate research, to be included and involved in research projects. There is recognition that the exploitation of new knowledge does not just occur at the end of a research project, but rather is embedded throughout the research process itself. However, the sponsors recognise that the role of non-academics will be different from that of fellow academic colleagues, and therefore, the involvement should be appropriate to the nature of the project. The commissioning panel will take account of an appropriate context for the involvement of non-academic stakeholders in the research process.

Pathways to Impact

2.19 The ESRC and DFID expect that the researchers they fund under the joint scheme will have identified the potential impacts of their research on policy and practice, and will actively consider how these can be maximised and developed. Impact is usually best achieved when research questions are directed to a clear target audience. This emphasis on research impact will be reflected within the assessment process. Opportunities for making an impact may arise, and should be taken, at any stage during or after the life-course of the research.

2.20 To this end all applicants are required to include a '**Pathways to Impact'** Statement which addresses the following three questions:

- Who will benefit from this research?
- How will they benefit from this research?
- What will be done to ensure that they have the opportunity to benefit from this research?

2.21 Researchers are strongly encouraged to be innovative in the kinds of engagement, communications and research uptake activities they define within their 'Pathways to Impact' Statement.

2.22 It is strongly recommended that each project hold a seminar with key stakeholders in the country or countries where the majority of the research is taking place, at the earliest opportunity to set out the aims of the projects and fully ground it in the local context. This will facilitate the potential co-production of knowledge and will also allow researchers to 'reality check' their plans. If this kind of activity is not appropriate for your project we would expect you to explain why in your 'Pathways to Impact' statement.

2.23 It is recommended that a minimum of 10% of the overall budget should be dedicated to delivering the activities outlined in the 'Pathways to Impact' Statement.

2.24 In addition to the 'Pathways to Impact' Statement developed by individual projects, it should also be noted that the two funding agencies may unilaterally or jointly wish to sponsor additional outreach activities involving one or more projects in order to increase the impact of their research outcomes. All grant holders will be expected to cooperate with the sponsors in such activities, and will also be expected to represent the scheme and their project through involvement, where appropriate, in third-party events. All grant holders will be expected to update information about their outputs on the ESRC Society Today online database, and previous ESRC grant holders are encouraged to maintain their output record from previous grants. All grant holders will be asked to provide information on their projects to DFID's Research Portal www.research4development.info (R4D) and to comply with both ESRC and DFID's commitment to open access.[15]

Assessment Criteria

2.25 Peer reviewers and the assessment panel will consider whether applications are of world-class standard (being intellectually innovative, well-focused and methodologically-sound) and that the research has the potential to have a real impact on poverty reduction and will contribute to achievement of the MDGs. They will be asked to comment on the following criteria in assessing proposals. Applicants are therefore advised to consider all these criteria in preparing their applications:

i) Research agenda

- the significance of the question the research is designed to answer;
- world class research design that shows specificity, clarity and coherence between research questions, research methods and anticipated intellectual outcomes;
- clear and rigorous articulation of appropriate research methods and data analysis regime;
- gender analysis and use of disaggregated data where relevant across a range of variables including gender, ethnicity, age, disability and spatial geography.[16]
- clarity as to how, and by whom, the research findings will be used. (e.g. in terms of conceptual understanding, theoretical or methodological development, application of research-based knowledge to policy or practice and/or development of inter-disciplinary approaches etc).

ii) Project Management

- are the project management plans and configuration of roles and responsibilities reasonable, appropriate and credible for the given project?
- do the credentials of the investigators and host institutions appear appropriate to deliver the project?
- are the resources requested reasonable to deliver the project?

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15 Please see Section Six of the ESRC's Research Funding Guide for details of the ESRC's policy on the Communication and Exploitation of Research Results. The Research Funding Guide can be accessed at: http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/research_funding/

16 For further guidance on gender analysis and data disaggregation please refer to the 'ESRC/DFID Guidance on Application Process' Paragraph 2.19.1.

iii) Capacity building

- does the project include appropriate training and development opportunities for research staff in lead and partner organisations both in the UK and overseas and/or development of skills and capacity in local communities?;
- **where an application includes a project linked doctoral student** does the application:
  - demonstrate sufficient evidence of an appropriate research environment and infrastructure for doctoral work?;
  - are the arrangements for the supervision of students adequate and appropriate (including the suitability of the proposed doctoral supervisor(s)?;
  - is the research conducted by a doctoral student a discrete piece of work which is clearly of a standard to be submitted as a doctoral thesis, but that will also produce synergy and added value to the main research project?

iv) Pathways to Impact, Stakeholder Engagement, and Outputs

- does the project have real potential for impact on poverty reduction?
- has the applicant defined a credible, feasible and appropriate impact plan?
- is there effective demand for the research from policy makers and other stakeholders beyond the academic community?
- is the analysis of who the stakeholders/potential end users of research outputs are and the processes and means for engaging with them appropriate, at all stages of the research process?
- does the 'Pathways to Impact' Statement present a set of clear, well-funded activities for genuine collaboration with a variety of stakeholders throughout the life of the project?
- are their clear plans to make findings available to target audiences and to maximise research uptake?

v) Value for money

Overall assessment of the likely value for money for the sum sought:

- Is there a clear understanding of the problem/issue to be addressed through this research?
- Is the proposed approach appropriate to address this issue/problem? Have alternative solutions/approaches been considered?

Time commitments of research participants:

- Are the appropriate level of staff doing the appropriate level of work? Is the amount of senior staff time on the project appropriate?
- Is the mix of the team right?
- Are the daily fee rates for research staff reasonable?

Specification and justification of Research Budget:

- Is the travel and subsistence budget justified and reasonable?
- Are the research uptake activities adequately funded?
- Is there an appropriate balance between funding field work and funding analysis tasks?

vi) Research Partnerships

- What is the nature of any proposed partnership or collaboration?
- Are the benefits derived from partnerships reciprocal and proportionately distributed?

- Are the roles and responsibilities of partners and collaborators proportionate and balanced?

3. What can applicants apply for?

3.1 **Applications are invited for projects with a FEC value of between £100,000 and £500,000** (see sections 3.2 to 3.4 below for explanation of FEC). Proposals received under this call will be peer reviewed in a two stage process. The initial assessment will be by expert members of a Peer Review Pool, from which around 50 applications will be shortlisted for assessment and decision by a Commissioning Assessment Panel. Funding decisions will be communicated to applicants by early April 2011.

3.2 The budget limits on grant applications under this scheme refer to the total cost of the project – known as **full economic costs (FEC)**[17]. The FEC cost is not the actual cash contribution paid by the ESRC. The actual cash contribution, the 'ESRC contribution', for UK applicants will normally be 80% of FEC. Funding arrangements for non-UK institutions are set out in section 3.3 below. If applicants or their host organisations have any doubts about the costing basis of their applications they should contact the Scheme Secretariat.

3.3 **For non-UK institutions,** in response to concerns about the effect of the '80% rule' on developing country partners, the scheme will support in full (100%) of all the direct costs of the research. In addition, indirect costs may be charged on staff salary and other staff related costs (ie. statutory contributions analogous to UK National Insurance or Superannuation contributions). Indirect costs may **not** be charged on non-staff related direct costs, e.g. equipment, travel and subsistence, consultancies, conferences etc. The following rates for indirect costs should be applied: for applicants from developing countries, the overhead rate is 50%; for applicants from developed countries, the overhead rate is 20%. A list of developing countries for the purpose of this costing regime is available on the call website.

ESRC will ask for adequate evidence of the costing basis for all direct and indirect costs. If an applicant is recommended for a grant budgets may be reduced if considered excessive. Further information is provided in the document **'Costings Guidance for Non-UK Institutions and Partners'**. Applications from a non-UK institution or which include any non-UK partners must refer to this document before completing the JeS application form.

3.4 Further details on FEC are available on the ESRC website and will also be accessible in the guidance notes for completing application forms. In addition, all applicants are also advised to consult their institutional finance officers. It should be noted that in the first call there were concerns about the lack of justification included for many cost items. Applicants and their institutions should follow the latest advice and be very clear on the extent and purpose of each budget line.

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[17] Your application form will include a table called 'Summary of Resources Required for the Project'. The total cost appearing in Colum 3 'Full Economic Cost' should NOT, under any circumstances, exceed £500k.

3.5 The duration of grants should range from a minimum one year up to a maximum three years, though applicants should note the specific rules for duration of projects involving doctoral students.

4. Eligibility to apply to the scheme

Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators

4.1 The scheme is open to researchers based in recognised higher education institutions, research organisations or organisations with a credible research capacity (see sections 4.7 to 4.12 below for details about recognised organisations and the need to obtain recognition before grants will be given). Researchers may be based in either UK or non-UK organisations with demonstrable research capacity.

4.2 Under the scheme rules an individual is permitted to be involved in multiple bids to the call, but **cannot be the Principal Investigator on more than one bid**.

4.3 All grants will be made to the institution hosting the principal investigator, and that institution will be subject to standard terms and conditions for ESRC awards, including with regard to the disbursement of funds to co-investigators at other institutions, and with additional scheme reporting requirements.

4.4 **IMPORTANT NOTE:** In addition to a formal recognition process explained in paragraph 4.7 to 4.12 below, all applicants and their organisations must be registered to use the Research Councils Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system, which is the system to be used to receive and process all applications under this call. Section 5 on HOW TO APPLY contains separate information and guidance on this registration process, and all applicants who think they might wish to make an application are strongly advised to read Section 5 carefully. **ALL APPLICANTS AND CO-APPLICANTS MUST BE REGISTERED TO USE THE JE-S SYSTEM.**

Other Collaborators and Consultants

4.5 In addition to principal and co- investigators, it is possible to name other specific collaborators and consultants in the application, for instance public, private or NGO sector experts who could provide invaluable stakeholder inputs and advice to the project. These need to be properly and fully costed.

Studentships and Visiting Fellowships

4.6 Doctoral students may be included on applications provided the research project will be of three-year duration. Whilst this scheme will allow doctoral students from any country (see also paragraphs 2.13 and 2.14 above), support for students will be governed by the standard ESRC rules as explained in the *Guide for Postgraduate Award-holders*. Unnamed students may be included in the application, provided the specific topic and locations of students are specified, and there is a rational and specific contribution of the student to the research agenda. ESRC should be informed of subsequent filling of doctoral student posts using the standard quota nomination form to enable checks to be undertaken to ensure compliance with basic eligibility criteria. It should be borne in mind that institutional and supervisory support for students will likely continue beyond the funding period, for instance to allow for the writing-up period, thesis submission date and final completion date. Applicants who are considering including a doctoral studentship in their proposed research project must refer to the document **'How to include a doctoral student on a project'** on the Scheme call web page.

4.7 Visiting Fellowships, both professorial and lecturer/researcher level may be included in a research project. In this case the proposed Fellow working on the grant should be known and named on the application. A coherent rationale for their role and contribution to the project must be included in the application.

Recognised Research institutions

4.8 **Je-S registration** is the process that all principal investigators and co-investigators should complete in order to submit an application to the scheme. This process has been simplified for this scheme to focus primarily on confirming that an applicant is from an authentic entity with a capacity to undertake research. This means that applicants must be based in an institution that possesses an existing in-house capacity to carry out research that materially extends and enhances the national or international research base and are able to demonstrate an independent capability to undertake and lead research programmes. **For further information on how to apply for Je-S registration, see section 5, 'How to Apply'**.

4.9 Certain minimum eligibility checks will be applied to all applications on receipt at ESRC in order to minimise the burden on peer reviewers. Peer reviewers will also be asked to comment on the credibility of the host institution. Any person who intends to apply but is unsure whether their institution will be eligible for recognition should consult with the Scheme Secretariat before proceeding in order to minimise the risk of wasted effort.

4.10 **Research Council recognition** of institutions eligible to hold grants is a longer and more involved process that will be undertaken once a proposal has been recommended for funding. This must be completed before an award can be issued to the award-holder's institution. The following sections 4.10 to 4.12 outline this process.

4.11 All grants will be awarded to the institution of the principal investigator (PI), and this institution will be responsible for the proper disbursement and accountability of all monies received. In order to be eligible to hold ESRC grants, all institutions must be recognised as meeting specific criteria relating to mandate, research infrastructure, governance and accountability. Most UK higher education institutions and some other independent UK research organisations are already **recognised institutions**, and hence eligible to apply for, and hold, Research Council grants.

4.12 Most Non-UK institutions and some UK organisations will not be recognised to hold UK Research Council grants. Any researcher from such an institution applying under this scheme, either as a principal applicant or co-applicant, should note that their institution will have to obtain recognition from the ESRC before any grant can be confirmed. In order to minimise administrative burdens and costs to both applicants and ESRC staff, formal recognition will only be pursued should the Selection Panel make a positive funding decision.

4.13 Further details of the recognition process are available from the secretariat but in broad terms it covers:

- Research infrastructure, intellectual capacity and critical mass of researchers to undertake high-quality social science research;
- institutional governance and accountability structures;
- audit and accountability procedures;
- sources of core funding and other funding.

5. How To Apply and Decision-making Process

Generic Background on Deadlines and Submitting Applications

5.1 All applications must be submitted in English costed in pounds sterling (£) and made on the official ESRC application form using the Research Councils Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system.

Application forms will be available on the Je-S system (accessed via http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/ElectronicForms/index.aspx?). The application has two elements: an on-line form comprising a number of structured boxes for key information, a free text section called 'Case for Support', to be completed offline and uploaded as an attachment to the online form along with a series of mandatory attachments. The application form will include generic guidance on the completion of the structured boxes and sections of the form. Full guidance on how to complete a JES application form for this Scheme is available in the document **'Guidance for Application Process'** available on the Scheme call web page. Generic guidance is also available from the Je-S Help screens.

5.2 The Case for Support contains the substance of the research application and it is essential that a coherent exposition of the proposed project is presented addressing the intellectual and academic case, potential for impact on the poverty reduction agenda, any collaboration or partnership configuration, an appropriate management plan and justification for all costs. You must indicate both in your case for support and in the 'Summary' section of the form if your proposal relates to one of the three research highlight notices for this call – 'Population and Development'; 'Development in a Changing World'; or 'Inequality and Development'.

5.3 In order to use the Je-S system **Principal Investigators (PIs) and the host organisation** need to be registered on the system. Registration of both the PI's organisation and their own details must be completed before the application can be formally submitted to the ESRC. **Hence, all Principal Investigators are advised to check whether their organisation has been registered to use the UK Research Councils' Je-S system, and if not they should make immediate enquiries to the Je-S Helpdesk indicating their intention to**

apply for the ESRC-DFID scheme. The Je-S Helpdesk may be contacted by e-mail: JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0)1793 44 4164 and is staffed Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm UK time (excluding Public and other holidays). Applicants will need to provide full address details of their organisation together with contact details (name, telephone number and e-mail address) of a senior person within their organisation who will be responsible for authorising the formal submission of the application, such as a Vice Chancellor, Director of Resources, Finance Director, or Head of Department.

Co-Investigators (COIs) and their institutions also need to register with Je-S. COIs need to inform Je-S that they intend to be a COI on an ESRC/DFID application and provide full address details of their organisation. All PIs and COIs that are not already registered on Je-S are strongly advised to refer to the document "**Guide to Creating a Je-S Account**" on the call website.

5.4 The deadline for all research applications to this call is **16:00 hours, local British time** on **Thursday, 30th September 2010.**

5.5 Applications can only be accepted by electronic submission through the Je-S system.

Sufficient time must be allowed for Je-S registration if you or your institution do not have Je-S registration. **We recommend that applications for registration are made at least a month before the call deadline**. When setting up a Je-S account your institution will be asked to nominate **an approver** and **a submitter** whose roles are to check and then submit the proposal to ESRC. Full guidance on registering on Je-S can be found in the document '**ESRC/DFID Guide to Creating a Je-S account**' on the call website.

Before completing the on-line form applicants should refer to the documents '**ESRC/DFID Guide to Creating an Application**' and '**Guidance on the Application Process**' on the call website. Care and attention must be given to completing the on-line form correctly. Applications that are not completed correctly may be rejected by the ESRC office.

Please note that an application will be submitted to the ESRC through the Submitter Pool at your institution. Once you have completed and submitted your proposal it is sent to the 'Submitter Pool' at your institution. There are then **two stages** to the final submission process. The application must be '**approved'** and then '**submitted'** to ESRC by the institution's nominated approver and submitter. If you are unsure of who the nominated approver and submitter at your institution is please contact the Je-S helpdesk at JeShelp@rcuk.ac.uk. It is recommended that applicants forward their application to the submitter pool at **least 24 hours** before the call deadline to allow sufficient time for the approval and final submission process.

The final submission process is the responsibility of the host institution and the ESRC cannot accept responsibility for any delays which may occur It is recommended that applicants submit in good time before the call deadline at this stage. We strongly advise applicants to secure confirmation from their relevant administrator that the application has been submitted successfully to the ESRC.

Applications **must** be submitted to Je-S by the call deadline – see para. 5.4 above. Electronic acknowledgements will be sent to the principal investigator and submitting organisation.

5.6 All elements of the application form must be completed correctly. Specific care should also be taken with the Full Economic Costing (FEC) regime which will be the basis for any grant given to successful applications. Guidance on FEC is available on the ESRC website. For non-UK institutions and UK institutions not affected by FEC, it is expected that they will be able to comply with full and transparent costing for budget elements (see section 3). Please note, all costings should be in pounds sterling (£).

5.7 Proposals received under this call will be peer reviewed in a two stage process: the initial assessment will be by expert members of a Peer Review Pool, from which around 50 applications will be shortlisted for assessment and decision by a Commissioning Assessment Panel. Funding decisions will be communicated to applicants by early April 2011, with start dates for awards from 1 June 2011 onwards. Please allow more time if your institution will require completion of formal eligibility/recognition prior to issuing the grant (see section 4.8-4.12 above).

5.8 The Case for Support is the substance of your proposal and is mandatory. It should not exceed 6 A4 sides, plus up to a further 6 A4 sides for various annexes and supporting documents such as bibliographic materials, glossaries of technical terms, charts, diagrams and tables. In addition, a Pathways to Impact statement of up to 2 sides of A4 must be included. CVs for each applicant and any named research staff (maximum of 2 A4 sides) should also be included. Applicants must also provide details of all project partners in a **one side A4 attachment**: we require the name of the partner organisation; the organisation address, the name of any individuals from this organisation involved in the research project; a brief indication of the role of the partner (e.g. COI).

Applicants must ensure that they have read and complied with the guidance set out in the document '**Guidance on Application Process**' and the generic Je-S advice for ESRC applicants. Where Scheme specific guidance differs from generic Je-S advice, the Scheme specific guidance should be followed.

5.9 Applicants are advised that they should pay attention to the environmental implications of their research. They should take reasonable steps to minimise or offset the carbon footprint of all travel supported by the Scheme. Where the project has control, documents, reports and paper outputs should be printed on paper made from sustainably managed forests and/or recycled paper.

6. Contact Details for Scheme Secretariat

6.1 The ESRC is responsible for implementation and administration of the joint ESRC-DFID scheme. Jointly funded by the two sponsoring agencies, a scheme secretariat has been established to develop and manage the scheme policies and procedures.

6.2 The scheme secretariat is based at ESRC, in Polaris House, Swindon, UK. All queries or comments about this Joint Scheme should be addressed in the first instance to the ESRC/DFID email address, DFID@esrc.ac.uk. Any enquiries may also be addressed to:

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