

UK–Ukraine R&I twinning grants scheme Call guidelines

Call closes: 5pm GMT 16 January 2023

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1.0 Background and overview of the grant

Overview:

Universities UK International's (UUKi) UK-Ukraine R&I twinning grants scheme provides funding until 31 August 2023 for eligible higher education institutions participating in the [UK-Ukraine Twinning Initiative](#), coordinated by the Cormack Consultancy Group (CCG), to develop bespoke programmes of work that address the reciprocal research and innovation needs of both Ukrainian and UK institutions and researchers.

This scheme is funded by [Research England](#). Research England's investment, which will be awarded through UUKi, will see partnered institutions collaborating on and building their capacity in research and innovation into the future. It will also mean UK universities can scale up and sustain their commitment to working with their Ukrainian partners.

This scheme is open to all UK HEIs eligible for UKRI funding.

Background:

Following the invasion of Ukraine, UUKi established a cross-HE coordination group and has been at the heart of the university sector response to the crisis. The most significant development of this has been the UK-Ukraine Twinning Initiative, which was established in collaboration with Cormack Consultancy Group (CCG) and the support of the Office of the President of Ukraine. The twinning programme has seen [100 partnerships](#) created to date.

While much of this partnership activity has initially [focused](#) on immediate needs (especially teaching and basic infrastructure), partners are increasingly looking at ways of supporting the long-term research and innovation collaboration between the UK and Ukraine. As the programme matures, it is vital that the participating universities have the resources to ensure that partnerships fulfil their strategic objectives and build longer-term capacity and strategic capability that will better prepare HEIs for engaging with future crises.

For more background information on this programme and UUKi's other activities in support of Ukrainian universities, visit our [webpage](#).

2.0 Objectives and aims of the scheme

This scheme offers strategic support for existing twinning partnerships to enable the transition of those agreements into practical collaboration in research and innovation. This will help ensure that the twinning scheme not only supports the needs of Ukrainian research and innovation but the longer-term strategic objectives of both

institutions and nations. This grant scheme is funded through the UK's contribution to Official Development Assistance (ODA) and as such, must be administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of Ukraine as its main objective, with any benefits to the UK or UK institutions secondary.

The expected outcomes of this grant scheme include:

- UK universities will have resources to build long-term strategic partnerships with their partners in Ukraine that support both institutions and UK/Ukraine-wide research and innovation priorities
- Shared resources and capabilities that will better position UK universities to respond to future crises
- Partnerships that can build shared research and innovation projects that will position the UK sector as a global leader in crisis response
- Ukraine's university-based research and innovation ecosystem will be supported through and beyond the current crisis

3.0 Available funding

The total amount of funding available for the UK-Ukraine R&I twinning grants scheme is £4.3m. All grant expenditure must take place between 28 November 2022 and 31 August 2023.

Proposals should be in the range of **£25,000** to **£200,000**, however, applicants should think carefully about their ability to spend all awarded funds and carry out the programmes of work within the deadlines. Applications are welcome from all eligible institutions. UUKi anticipates making in the region of 30 to 40 awards.

4.0 Eligibility

The UK-Ukraine R&I twinning grants scheme is open to UK higher education institutions involved in the UK-Ukraine University Twinning Initiative coordinated by Cormack Consultancy Group (CCG), including those within the devolved nations.

Applicants must have had their first twinning call with their Ukrainian twin facilitated by CCG by the application deadline of 5pm GMT Monday 16 January 2023 at the latest to be eligible to apply. Please contact the Strategic Partnerships team at twinning-grants@international.ac.uk if you have any questions about your institution's eligibility.

Applications will only be accepted from UK higher education institutions that are [eligible for UKRI funding](#). Other countries involved in the twinning initiative with Ukrainian partners are not eligible for this scheme.

Applications are limited to one per twinning partnership, recognising that some UK institutions have multiple twinning partners in Ukraine. Proposals should be developed in collaboration between twinned partners and completed application

forms must be signed off by appropriate senior representatives of both the UK and Ukrainian institutions.

5.0 Eligible costs and profile of spend

We welcome creative applications from institutions for targeted programmes of work that will support the specific strategic needs of the partnership as they relate to research, innovation, international partnership, and crisis response.

Supported activities within the partnerships could include, but are not limited to:

- Partnership development workshops
- Seed funding for future bilateral research collaborations
- Researcher support and summer schools
- Access to training and development for research management staff
- Support for research infrastructure and consumables
- Data processing and access to research services and e-resources
- Access to UK Post Graduate Research (PGR) and Early Career Researcher (ECR) training and skills programmes
- Researcher and PGR visits and capacity building

The proposed programmes of work should support UK partners **to scale up and sustain** their commitment to working with their Ukrainian partners and build **new areas of focus or research and innovation activity**. This grant is funded through the UK's contribution to [Official Development Assistance \(ODA\)](#), and as such project activities must be administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of Ukraine as its main objective.

Please read the below guidance on eligible costs before completing the budget template.

Directly incurred costs:

Directly incurred costs are eligible to be included in the grant proposal. Directly incurred costs are those that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project. These must be charged to projects as the cash value actually spent and supported by an auditable record. The four categories of directly incurred costs (staff, travel and subsistence, equipment, and other costs) are outlined in more detail below.

Indirect costs and overheads:

Indirect costs are non-specific costs and overheads charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly incurred costs and should be shown as a single figure. This includes administrative costs such as staff, finance, and library and departmental services, including where the research or project activity is being undertaken in Ukraine. **Indirect costs are capped at 20% of the total direct costs.**

The following costs may **not** be included as Directly incurred costs for this call and therefore must be included in the requested indirect costs category:

- Charges for office or laboratory space
- Electricity, heating, lighting
- Telephone and basic communication costs (unless there is need for significant project-based activities such as phone interviews)
- Routine photocopying and printing (Large print runs such as publications or workshop papers may be charged to the grant)
- Standard Office computing, including desktop and laptop computers and associated software. Individual items of computing equipment may not be charged to a grant (High performance computing facilities which are linked to a specific research task may in some circumstances be charged to the grant – for further clarification please check with UUKi)
- Office support staff (e.g., finance staff, basic secretarial support, computing support staff). Project managers can be claimed as a direct cost on the grant
- Continuing Professional Development for staff

Please note that all directly and indirectly incurred costs must be compliant with the ODA requirements of the grant scheme.

5.1 Eligible cost guidance

- **Staff**
 - Salary may be sought for any member of staff who is involved in delivering the aims and objectives of the proposed project. This could include salary of any member of the research team, for example principal investigator, co-investigators, postdocs, technicians, statisticians, technologists, methodologists working 100% of their time on this project or where their time is supported by a full audit trail (for example timesheets or project records).
 - There is no limit on the number of staff included in a proposal, however, applications will be assessed on the basis that the number of staff and their stated time commitment to the work is proportionate to and sufficient for the scope of the project activity.
 - It is the responsibility of the lead UK twin to have a process in place to monitor the time claimed by any staff member to ensure that no more than the maximum amount of time is claimed over all grants in which they are involved.
- **Travel and subsistence**
 - An application may include funds for travel and subsistence for staff assigned to the project where they are required by the nature of the work.
 - Travel costs should be based on the most suitable and economical form of travel. All train travel should be by standard class and any flights should be at the economy rate.
 - Carbon offsetting is an eligible cost and should reflect the normal policy of the lead UK institution.

- Visa fees, including those for PGR students, are eligible if directly incurred as a result of the grant.
- Costs for attendances at conferences may be included, where such attendance will be of direct benefit to the project. Conferences should, as far as possible, be individually identified in the proposal and attendance justified.
- Additional childcare costs beyond that required to meet the normal contracted requirements of the job, and that are directly related to the project, may be requested if the institutional policy is to reimburse them. This may include attendance at conferences and workshops that are directly related to the project. Childcare costs associated with normal working patterns are not eligible.
- Travel and living expenses may also be requested for collaborative working visits directly related to the proposed project.
- Subsistence and catering costs should reflect the normal rates applying to the lead UK twin institution.
- **Equipment**
 - You may request funding for new equipment and associated costs, including computers, software, and small items of equipment specific to the project where specifically necessary for the proposed project. All and any equipment required and any associated costs must be explained in the 'Justification of cost' section of the budget proposal.
 - Only equipment and consumables costing less than £10,000 inc. VAT per project are eligible.
- **Other**
 - Other allowable costs include any costs that are explicitly necessary for the delivery for the project activity, e.g., PGR and ECR training and skills workshop costs, recruitment and advertising for staff directly employed on the project.

Applicants should think carefully about their ability to spend all awarded funds and carry out the programmes of work before the deadline of **31 August 2023**. As such, budget requests should be proportional and realistic to the project timeframes. Budget categories within your proposal should also be proportionate to the total amount requested.

5.2 Ineligible cost guidance

UUKi would not expect the project to fund any costs that would normally be paid centrally by the applicant. Some more specific guidelines on ineligible costs are below:

- Teaching and education related activities including student fees (with the exception of some PGR activities as defined above) are outside the scope of this grant scheme and cannot be funded.
- Equipment over £10,000 inc. VAT is not eligible.
- Capital or infrastructure expenditure is not eligible.

- Open access and publication costs for UK institutions are not eligible as these charges are supported through block grants to UK HEIs. These may be included if exclusively for the Ukrainian partner.
- Patent costs and other IP costs are not eligible as UK universities already receive funding for these from Higher Education Innovation Funding.

If you have any questions on eligibility of activities or spending, please contact our Strategic Partnerships team at twinning-grants@international.ac.uk before submitting your grant proposal.

Spend profile:

Costs incurred from the date of the call launch (28 November 2022) can be included as part of your application. The applicant assumes the risk for any spend incurred before awards have been made.

UUKi will make a single lump sum payment equalling 100% of the grant approved to successful lead UK twin institutions by 31 March 2023 at the latest. **It is a condition of the grant that all funding must be expended, and all project-specific activities completed, by 31 August 2023.** Any underspend will be required to be returned to UUKi by 31 October 2023.

Research England and UUKi reserve the right to audit projects and so all receipts, invoices, timesheets, and other financial records associated with the project should be kept for seven years for justification of spend.

6.0 Terms of application

- This call for applications is not an agreement and is neither an offer nor invitation by UUKi to the prospective applicants or any other person. The purpose of the call document is to provide interested parties with information to assist in the formulation of their application.
- Applications that are not received by the specified deadline and with the correct attachments (Excel format budget template) will not be accepted.
- UUKi will notify both the lead applicant, lead Ukrainian contact, and senior university representatives as noted on the application form that the UK institution has been provisionally selected for an award (subject to agreeing a contract between UUKi and the institution).
- UUKi reserves the right to publish the names of provisionally selected institutions. By applying for an award, you are giving your consent for your details to be published in this way, provided your application is successful.
- All terms and conditions of award are subject to UK local law and practices and are subject to change by UUKi.
- UUKi may in its absolute discretion, but without being under any obligation to do so, update, amend, or supplement the information, assessment or assumptions contained in these guidelines.

6.1 Data protection

- UUKi will use information provided in the application for processing the application, making any consequential award, for the payment, monitoring and review of the award.
- UUKi shall share any necessary data on the application with BEIS, UKRI and Research England for reporting purposes, including providing full details of successful applicants.
- The UK government is committed to transparency in reporting ODA spending, the [International Aid Transparency Initiative \(IATI\)](#) open data standard. In line with this, information about this grant will be made available via the IATI registry.

6.2 ODA compliance

- This grant is funded through the UK's contribution to [Official Development Assistance \(ODA\)](#), and as such must be administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of Ukraine as its main objective.
- All applicants must provide an ODA compliance statement as part of the application. Further information on what should be included in the statement can be found [on the UKRI website](#) and in the application form.
- Any proposed changes to the project activity that could affect ODA compliance must be reported at the earliest opportunity to UUKi.
- If the project activity involves IP, sensitive data, or elements that may affect national security, applicants must notify UUKi and provide details of what the lead UK twin HEI will do to mitigate risks. More information can be found here: [Trusted Research and Innovation](#).

6.3 International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2002 compliance

- As required under the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2002, all applicants must provide a statement addressing how their project considers gender equality. This will be assessed as part of the grant assessment process. Further guidelines can be found [on the UKRI website](#) and in the application form.

7.0 How to apply

Please read all the accompanying documentation before submitting your application.

Applications must be submitted via the dedicated [call webpage](#) using the online application form, with your budget proposal (Excel format) by the application deadline **5pm GMT on 16 January 2023**. If you have any questions or issues with submission, please contact the Strategic Partnerships team as soon as possible at twinning-grants@international.ac.uk.

We recommend that you complete the application questions in the offline Word document and copy and paste them into the Microsoft form when you are ready to

submit, as the form may not save your answers if you lose connection. **Please note the offline version is for information only and Word copies of the application form will not be accepted.**

Frequently asked questions (FAQs), including application submission troubleshooting, are available here: [Frequently Asked Questions](#). These are updated regularly.

8.0 Evaluation criteria

Please refer to detailed criteria for applications in the call document Selection criteria (assessment rubric) (Annex B). Applications will be scored out of 15, with each of the following criteria scored out of 5 and equally weighted. The following criteria align with questions 16 – 19 in the online application form:

- Partnership and proposed activity
- Capacity strengthening and additionality
- Operational and cost feasibility of project

Meaningful engagement with the Gender Equality Statement will also be assessed and shortlisted applications may be returned for further development of the statement if it is not sufficient.

Projects must be compliant with the ODA requirements of this grant scheme, and this will be evaluated at the eligibility-check stage of the assessment process. Applications that are not ODA compliant as assessed through the ODA statement will not be awarded through this grant scheme.

Each application will be evaluated and scored remotely by at least two independent reviewers. The applications will be listed according to their scores and reviewed by a selection committee, chaired by Professor Julia Buckingham, Chair of the Institute of Cancer Research, who will make the final decision on funding allocations. The selection committee will comprise of Pro-Vice Chancellors at UK HEIs and senior members of staff with relevant experience from sector organisations. In the event of a split panel, the selection committee chair will have the deciding vote. Membership of the selection committee is subject to confirmation.

The decision of the selection committee is final and confidential. No appeals will be considered. UUKi will not enter into any communication on the selection committee's decisions.

9.0 Timeline

Call opens	28 November 2022
Call closes	5pm (GMT) 16 January 2023
Review and selection process	To be completed by 1 March 2023

Institutions notified of outcome	By 6 March 2023
Payments made by	No later than 31 March 2023
Project end date	No later than 31 August 2023

10.0 Terms and conditions of award

Full conditions of the award can be found in the Terms and conditions of offer letter (Annex C). The offer of award letter (which includes Terms and Conditions) will be added to the [webpage](#) the week commencing 12 December 2022.

11.0 Key call documents

The following documents can be found on the [call webpage](#):

- [Application form](#)
- Call guidelines
- Budget proposal spreadsheet (Annex A)
- Selection criteria (assessment rubric) (Annex B)
- Terms and conditions and offer letter (of award) (Annex C)
- Reporting template (Annex D)
- [FAQs](#)

The Reporting template (Annex D) and Offer of award letter (which includes Terms and Conditions) (Annex C) will be added in the week commencing 12 December.

As part of the application form, applicants will be asked to confirm they have read, understood, and agree with the call guidelines, selection criteria (assessment rubric) and offer of award letter.

12.0 About Universities UK International (UUKi)

[Universities UK International \(UUKi\)](#) is the international arm of Universities UK, representing UK universities and acting in their collective interests globally. We actively promote universities abroad, provide trusted information for and about them, and create new opportunities for the sector.

13.0 Contact

If you have any questions, please contact our Strategic Partnerships team:

Universities UK International
Woburn House
20 Tavistock Square

London WC1H 9HQ

Email: twinning-grants@international.ac.uk

14.0 Eligibility checklist

The application form is completed in full and complies with instructions given in this document.	
The UK-Ukraine R&I twinning grants scheme budget proposal spreadsheet has been completed and uploaded to the online application form.	
The Ukraine partner institution has been engaged in the development of the proposed grant project and is aware of its aims.	
Each partnership has submitted only one application under this call.	
The lead institution applying is a UK higher education institution that is eligible for funding from UKRI.	
In line with ODA requirements, the primary beneficiary of the proposed activity is Ukraine, with any benefits to the UK or UK higher education institutions secondary.	
Both partner institutions included in the application are part of a pre-existing UK-Ukraine Twinning Initiative partnership and have completed their first twinning call facilitated by CCG by 5pm GMT Monday 16 January 2023.	
The proposed spending and project activity can be completed by 31 August 2023.	

15.0 Environmental impact

Institutions in receipt of grant scheme funding must give due consideration to the environmental impact of their activities with the aim to minimise and mitigate harm wherever possible. UUKi encourages applicants to consider actions to minimise environmental impact in designing their proposal, including carbon offsetting. If you wish to discuss this further, please contact the Strategic Partnerships team at: twinning-grants@international.ac.uk.

16.0 Equality, diversity, and inclusion

In addition to the Gender Equality requirements above, UUKi expects institutions to ensure that equality, diversity, and inclusion is considered and supported in the design of the proposal, grant activities and the use of grant funds.