

# GW4



## GW4 BUILDING COMMUNITIES FUND GUIDANCE /



## 1. BACKGROUND /

The GW4 Alliance aims to build research communities of scale and capability that will deliver a step change in world-class research that could not be achieved in one of the institutions alone. GW4 seeks to work across all areas of academic activity, opening up new opportunities to collaborate in research; to develop shared research infrastructure, equipment and other resources; to seek joint capital investment; postgraduate training partnerships; joint appointments; and staff leadership and development initiatives.

The Building Communities Programme aims to enable new, high-quality GW4 research communities to self-assemble or for existing high quality collaborations to enhance their scope. These communities can be in any area of academic endeavour with the purpose of addressing a major research or societal challenge, and could include underpinning of regional research infrastructure. The Building Communities Fund has a limited amount of resources and is highly competitive. Awards will only be offered to outstanding projects that meet all the assessment criteria. For information on successful projects to date please see <http://gw4.ac.uk/building-communities/>.

This is the tenth Initiator Fund Call and ninth Accelerator Fund Call.

### PLEASE NOTE:

- This Open Call aims to develop both Initiator and Accelerator communities in **any area of research**.
- **Accelerator** applications, which aim to scale up existing communities to significant external bids in any area of research, are particularly welcomed.
- In response to current government initiatives, the panel wishes to encourage applications with a particular focus on the following funding opportunities:

The **Global Challenges Research Fund** (GCRF) with efforts centred on Official Development Assistance (ODA) compliant activity; please refer to the additional guidance in [Annex One](#).

The **Industrial Challenge Strategy Fund** (ISCF); please refer to the additional guidance in [Annex Two](#).

- This round of funding **is not limited** to addressing these initiatives.
- For general application pitfalls and top tips please refer to [Annex Three](#).

## 2. THE AIMS OF THE GW4 BUILDING COMMUNITIES FUND /

- ✓ To support enabling activities that bring together communities of academic staff with excellent and complementary expertise and capability.
- ✓ To address research questions with potential for high impact that could not be carried out by any single institution.
- ✓ To facilitate exploration of novel research concepts to a point at which significant external funding can be sought.
- ✓ To promote and facilitate ground breaking interdisciplinary research.
- ✓ To demonstrate clearly the added value of the GW4 collaboration.

## 3. GUIDELINES /

The GW4 Building Communities Programme consists of two funds (Initiator and Accelerator). Research communities may apply from any area of academic endeavour, including the arts, humanities, social science, experimental and theoretical science, engineering and medicine. We explicitly encourage interdisciplinarity.

This is an Open Call and applications in all areas of research are therefore invited to both the Initiator

and Accelerator Funding streams. However, Accelerator applications which aim to scale up existing communities to significant external bids in any area of research, are particularly welcomed.

Applications with a focus on the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) or Industrial Challenge Strategy Fund (ISCF) are also encouraged.

### **3.1 GW4 INITIATOR FUND /**

This funding is for workshops, sandpits or other community building activities that enable new, or previously informal, communities to scope and refine research ideas and identify potential collaborators.

- Initiator funding is available for workshops, sandpits or other community building/collaborative activities that enable communities to scope and refine research ideas and identify potential collaborators.
- Initiator funding can be used as stand-alone award or, where appropriate and available, as a step towards applying for either Accelerator or other external funding.
- Eligible costs are travel and subsistence, external speakers/facilitators, equipment (small purchases only, justifiable in line with project deliverables) venue and catering costs, and administration support (up to a maximum of 10% of the award value and only where fully justifiable within the context of the proposal).
- Ineligible costs include academic salaries, studentship fees, internal research facilities costs and other indirect costs.
- Funding will be provided to the lead applicant who will be responsible for all arrangements for any events, activities and participation.

- All funded applications will be promoted via the GW4 website and GW4 portal.
- All Initiator funded activities are expected to be completed in a five-month period from the award date. Variations from this will be considered but only where this is fully justified within the context of the project.
- Leads should discuss their application with their University's research support team, who will notify GW4 Programme Managers<sup>1</sup>. Where appropriate and feasible this team may be able to provide some logistical and other support for the planned activities if the application is successful.

Applications up to a maximum £20k will be invited.

### **3.2 GW4 ACCELERATOR FUND /**

This funding is for collaborative pump priming activities which will normally position the community to win major external funding and/or measures of academic esteem. Applicants for the Accelerator Fund will either have successfully completed the Initiator stage or provided evidence of recent activities that have enabled the scoping of research ideas to a level appropriate for direct submission to the Accelerator Fund.

- Applications to the Accelerator Fund will only be considered where there is justification that it fits a funding gap and there is clear added value.
- Applicants to the Accelerator Fund may have previously applied for the Initiator Fund or be able to provide evidence of recent activities that have enabled the scoping of research ideas appropriate for the GW4 Accelerator Fund.
- Accelerator Funding is for structured pump priming activities and may be used in a variety of ways with the expectation that

---

<sup>1</sup> GW4 Programme Managers:  
BATH Richard Hocking [R.J.Hocking@bath.ac.uk](mailto:R.J.Hocking@bath.ac.uk)  
BRISTOL Jenny Knapp [Jenny.Knapp@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:Jenny.Knapp@bristol.ac.uk)

CARDIFF Jude Bown [BownJA@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:BownJA@cardiff.ac.uk)  
EXETER Charlie Lane [C.Lane@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:C.Lane@exeter.ac.uk)

support will lead to an application for external funding.

- Applications between £20k and £75k will be invited. Please note this is a highly competitive fund.
- Eligible costs include travel and subsistence, consumables, meeting costs, external facilitation and support, post doc salaries and administration support (up to a maximum of 10% of the award value and only where fully justifiable within the context of the proposal).
- Ineligible costs include academic salaries, equipment, studentship fees/stipend, internal facilities costs and other indirect costs.
- Funding will be provided to the lead and co applicant(s), as laid out in the application. Leads should discuss their application with their University's research support team so that RDM/RDOs can provide support as appropriate and ensure bids are appropriately costed. The University's Research Support Team will notify the GW4 Programme Managers.
- All funded GW4 Communities will be promoted on the GW4 website and GW4 portal.
- All Accelerator funded activities are expected to be completed within an eight-month period from the award date. Variations from this will be considered but only where this is fully justified within the context of the project.
- Proposals from highly developed communities or those intending to respond to a specific major funding opportunity with a close deadline are advised to speak to their University's research support team as soon as possible.

### **3.3 ALL APPLICATIONS MUST:**

- I. Be a strategic fit to one (or more) of the GW4 Grand Challenge areas. Applicants

should clearly articulate the challenge(s) being addressed, and identify how the project will enable their community to benefit from related research funding opportunities.

### **GW4 Building Communities**

#### **Grand Challenges:**

- 1) Health, demographic change and wellbeing.
  - 2) Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the bioeconomy.
  - 3) Secure, clean and efficient energy.
  - 4) Smart, green and integrated transport.
  - 5) Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials.
  - 6) Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies.
  - 7) Secure societies - protecting freedom and security of nations, society and citizens.
  - 8) Living in a digital world.
  - 9) Advanced materials.
  - 10) Social justice and inequality, local and global.
- II. Involve at least three GW4 institutions, with communities involving all four partners preferred. Where fewer than four are involved this will need to be justified. Each GW4 institute has a dedicated GW4 Programme Manager<sup>1</sup> who can help put you in touch with appropriate partners.
  - III. Articulate and evidence the added value of working across GW4. This may be in terms of capacity and capability building, complementarity or synergy of expertise, new interdisciplinary groupings, academic endeavours and the ability to attract external funding.

IV. Previous applications may be accessed at the discretion of the previous successful applicant. The GW4 Building Communities team will endeavour to contact the previous successful PI for release of information. For information on previously funded GW4 projects please see <http://gw4.ac.uk/building-communities/>

#### **4. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE /**

If your application has a focus on either the GCRF (ODA compliance) or ISCF, please refer to the additional guidance in [Annexes One](#) and [Two](#). If your application is not relevant to these areas, please disregard this section.

#### **5. REPORTING /**

All funded communities must provide a final report proportionate to their stage and scale. Communities are expected to participate in evaluations & updates, and promotional & communication events, as appropriate. Reporting will be through the GW4 Communities portal, to which funded communities will be provided with full access.

#### **6. APPLICATION PROCESS /**

All Lead applicants are expected to speak to their University research support team in advance of applying.

Applicants are to complete either the **INITIATOR FUND APPLICATION FORM** or the **ACCELERATOR**

**FUND APPLICATION FORM** and to submit this to [gw4initiator@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:gw4initiator@exeter.ac.uk) or [gw4accelerator@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:gw4accelerator@exeter.ac.uk) respectively by **31 May 2018**.

Applications will be assessed and considered by the GW4 Building Research Communities Review Panel and taken to the GW4 Board for formal approval. Applicants will be notified of their award in the week following the Review Panel.

#### **7. PREPARATION /**

Applicants should ensure that activities are planned and scheduled accordingly, so that in the event of an award, activities can be undertaken rapidly. We expect projects to be completed within the stated deadlines of 5 months [Initiator projects] and 8 months [Accelerator Projects].

Extended project timelines may be considered by the Building Communities Review Panel but only where they are fully justified and proportionate to the scope of the project.

#### **8. FEEDBACK AND RESUBMISSIONS /**

Please note that feedback is not provided for Initiator projects and is limited for Accelerator projects. Resubmission is by invitation only.



## 9. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR INITIATOR AND ACCELERATOR FUNDS /

This guidance has been drawn up to assist applicants when completing their Initiator and Accelerator application forms. The purpose is to explain what type of information and evidence is required to satisfy the assessment criteria. Copies of previously successful applications may be obtained by contacting your GW4 Programme Manager.

Assessment criteria	Type of Evidence Required
Strategic fit	Communicates fit to one or more GW4 Grand Challenge area. Using data to substantiate the need for the research to be undertaken and the unique nature of the opportunity.
Fit to GCRF ODA Criteria  <b>(this criteria is encouraged but is not an explicit requirement of this funding call)</b>	If appropriate to your research, clear demonstration of how the proposal meets the requirements of GCRF and specifically on <a href="#">ODA compliance</a> . The project should articulate how it promotes the economic development and welfare of developing countries, specifying outcomes that focus on building capacity and promoting long-term sustainable growth of countries on the DAC list. For more guidance see <a href="#">Annexes One</a> and <a href="#">Two</a> .
Step change	Clear and specific detail as to the potential outcomes & impact from the proposed research which is only possible, or significantly enhanced, as a result of it being undertaken by a GW4 community rather than by an individual academic or institution.
Leveraging funding	Clear articulation of how the GW4 community will be able to leverage external funding as a direct result of this BC funding. Specific information provided to evidence how and when bids will be written, to whom they will be submitted and by when.
Impact	Communicates how this project will create impact in a way that will benefit each of the GW4 institutions. What is this potential impact [internal/ external] and when might it be felt.
Published outputs	Specific reference to high quality publications to be written as a direct result of this project; to whom they will be submitted and by when
Sustainable development of GW4 community	Proposals outline mechanisms that enable the GW4 communities created through this funding to stay connected and operational in the long term. Communicates how the momentum of bringing together so many interested parties for the purpose of producing quality GW4 research can be sustained in the long term.
Value for money	Does the proposal demonstrate value for money by communicating strong evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a unique research opportunity that is in line with the grand challenges</li> <li>• realistic, proportionate and appropriate costs.</li> <li>• mobilising an already interested, but perhaps disparate, research community, to come together and collaborate for the purpose of step change quality research</li> <li>• project management capabilities of the PI &amp; GW4 team - reassurance that, if funded, the project will run on time, to</li> </ul>

	<p>budget and deliver against agreed aims, activities and outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tangible and quantifiable outcomes and impact for the benefit of GW4 institutions as well as the wider environment</li> <li>• the potential to publish high quality papers and leverage external funding as a GW4 community</li> <li>• sustainable development of the GW4 communities and collaborative research in the long term</li> </ul>
--	--

#### **10. TIMELINE – GW4 INITIATOR FUND ROUND TEN /**

Call Open	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
Call Close	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2018
Review Panel	Week commencing 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
Notification of Awards	Week commencing 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
Project period	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2018 to 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2019

#### **11. TIMELINE – GW4 ACCELERATOR FUND ROUND NINE /**

Call Open	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2018
Call Close	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2018
Review Panel	Week commencing 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
Notification of Awards	Week commencing 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2018
Project period	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2018 to 31 <sup>st</sup> April 2019

## **ANNEX ONE: GCRF Additional Guidance**

### **What is the GCRF?**

*"The GCRF aims to support excellent research that directly contributes to the development and welfare of people in developing countries."*<sup>2</sup>

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a £1.5bn funding stream, created to address critical challenges faced by developing countries. It forms part of the Government's pledge to allocate 0.7% of Gross National Income to Official Development Assistance (ODA). ODA-funded activity focuses on the long-term sustainable growth of countries on the [OECD Development Assistance Committee](#) (DAC) list. The primary aim of proposed activity must be to promote the welfare and economic development of a country or countries on the list, be designed to address a development need and focus on developing country problems. Importantly, GCRF funding will be awarded in a manner that fits with [Official ODA guidelines](#) (See also [RCUK GCRF](#) and [ODA Guidance](#)).

### **GCRF Challenge Areas**

Central to the GCRF are 11 global challenge areas, created with reference to the [UK Aid Strategy](#) and the [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), which define the fund's focus for research funding. They are:

1. Secure and resilient food systems supported by sustainable marine resources and agriculture.
2. Sustainable health and wellbeing.
3. Inclusive and equitable quality education.
4. Clean air, water and sanitation.
5. Affordable, reliable and sustainable energy.
6. Sustainable livelihoods supported by strong foundations for inclusive economic growth and innovation.
7. Resilience and action on short-term environmental shocks and long-term environmental change.
8. Sustainable cities and communities.
9. Sustainable production and consumption of materials and other resources.
10. Understand and effectively respond to forced displacement and multiple refugee crises.
11. Reduce conflict and promote peace, justice and humanitarian action.
12. Reduce poverty and inequality, including gender inequalities.

### **How will BC applications be assessed in relation to the GCRF criteria?**

Initiator awards are limited to £20k and three months' duration and therefore, the expectation is not that communities will have developed full GCRF proposals in this time period, rather that they will have explored collaborative research ideas in line with GCRF priorities and ODA compliance so as to be strongly positioned to leverage this funding. Accelerator awards, up to £75k and of six month duration, will be expected to articulate how they will be able to deliver a step-change in research, in line GCRF priorities and ODA compliance, with a view to submitting a GCRF bid.

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/gcrf/challenges/>



## **GCRF**

In line with the GCRF's objectives, applications should focus on one of more GCRF challenge areas. The main aim of the project must be to explore joint disciplinary and interdisciplinary research priorities that have the potential for significant direct impact on the welfare and economic development of developing countries.

Additionally, applications should articulate consideration for capacity and capability strengthening and partnership building both within the UK and developing countries. For further information on the GCRF, please see the RCUK's [GCRF page](#)

## **ODA**

ODA compliance is a critical and implicit part of successful GCRF applications. Simply, to be ODA compliant, proposals need to promote the economic development and welfare of one or more [DAC listed developing countries](#) as its main objective. DAC maintains strict criteria on how this should be done, requiring projects to identify critical development needs, encourage sustainable impact, build capacity and capability within the involved countries, and avoid excluded activities (military activity, among others).

Applicants will be expected to have read and understood the ODA guidance and be able to clearly articulate the community's intention to undertake activities that will explore and identify collaborative research priorities that are ODA compliant. Further information on ODA guidance: [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/34086975.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/34086975.pdf)  
[www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm)

## **Compliance Table**

This table is a significantly simplified version of the numerous criteria used to assess GCRF complaint proposals and will be used during assessment to help determine the strength of your proposal in line with the GCRF criteria.

GCRF Assessment Criteria
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Is the proposal working for the development of DAC listed countries?</li><li>2. Is the application ODA compliant and free from any activity excluded under ODA?</li><li>3. Does the project address the economic development and welfare of the country in question as the main objective?</li><li>4. Does the application respond to one or more GCRF challenges, and an urgent research need?</li><li>5. To what extent does the application recognise and plan for the need to develop capacity building*, both in the UK and the target country/ies?</li><li>6. Is it possible to rate the potential for delivering significant, sustainable impact?</li><li>7. How strong is the team?</li></ol>

**\*Capacity building** activities are integral to successful GCRF research projects. The expectation is that both Initiator and Accelerator applications should articulate clear, well thought through plans for capacity building, although it is appreciated that implementation of these plans is only likely to occur during the longer Accelerator award period. If you require more help in relation to GCRF please contact the GW4 Building Communities Team who will put you in contact with your local GCRF experts

## **ANNEX TWO: ISCF Additional Guidance**

### **What is the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund (ISCF)?**

The [ISCF](#), part of the UK government's Industrial Strategy, is a major new support initiative for UK businesses and researchers. It is part of the government's commitment to invest a further £4.7 billion in UK research and development over the next four years.

The fund will invest in science and innovation challenges, to meet the demands and opportunities of UK industry, where the UK has the potential to turn strengths in research into a global industrial and commercial lead. Ten challenge areas were initially identified and six of these have been confirmed for significant investment. In order to ensure all opportunities are explored, GW4 are highlighting all of the ten original challenge areas. A further 250 smaller projects have received funding to a combined value of £100m over the next few years. These were chosen by Innovate UK from a diverse pool of previously submitted proposals that were not initially funded.

Whilst the area is developing, the GW4 Alliance is keen to encourage communities to consider the ISCF as a robust channel for development with partners, in order to position themselves to fully benefit this area of investment in the future.

ISCF has been discussed at the Heart of the South West LEP's Future Economy Group with a view to encouraging universities within the region to work together on geographically important challenges, building on our collective research and industrial strengths and opportunities, and the [Science and Innovation Audit](#).

### **How is the ISCF being administered?**

The fund is being administered by Innovate UK and Research Councils UK ([RCUK](#)) until the new body UK Research and Investment (UKRI) becomes operational in 2018.

### **ISCF Challenge Areas**

The ISCF aims to bring business and academia together to undertake research tackling core industrial challenges, to unlock markets and future industries in which the UK can become world-leading. The funding allocations are designed to help deliver a step-change in the UK's ability to turn research strength into commercialised products. The ten key areas for investment that were originally recognized are:

1. Bioscience and biotechnology
2. Leading edge healthcare and medicine
3. Manufacturing processes and materials of the future
4. Smart, flexible and clean energy technologies
5. Quantum technologies
6. Robotics and artificial intelligence
7. Satellites and space technologies
8. Transformative digital technologies
9. Integrated & Sustainable Cities

## 10. Technologies for the Creative Industries

### **ISCF Wave 1 Challenges**

Through work with academics and industry the government identified six key areas for investment over four years, these represented Wave 1 of the ISCF. The first three areas to receive funding were:

- 1. Clean & flexible energy or the 'Faraday Challenge'**  
£246m will be invested to help UK businesses seize opportunities in the transition to a low carbon economy, to ensure the UK leads in the **design, development and manufacture of batteries for the electrification of vehicles**.
- 2. Cutting edge healthcare and medicine**  
£197m will be invested in the **development of first-of-a-kind technologies for the manufacture of medicines** that will speed up patient access to new drugs and treatments.
- 3. Robotics and artificial intelligence (AI)**  
£93m will be invested in the **development of AI and robotics systems for deployment into extreme environments** (offshore and nuclear energy, space, and deep-mining) to make industry and public services more productive.

The second three areas to receive funding were:

- 4. Driverless cars**  
£38m will be invested in new collaborative research and development projects to **develop the next generation of AI and control systems** required to ensure the UK is well-placed to lead development of driverless care technologies.
- 5. Manufacturing and future materials**  
£26m will be invested in the UK's civil aerospace industry to develop the next generation of **affordable, light-weight composite materials** for aerospace, automotive and other advance manufacturing sectors.
- 6. Satellites and space technology**  
£99m will be invested in the provision of a facility to support new technologies for satellite launch, manufacture and testing.

### **ISCF Wave 2 Challenges** ([Industrial Strategy White Paper](#))

In November 2017, the Government released its White Paper on the Industrial Strategy. This contains further details relating to the ISCF and BEIS plans to invest £725m over four years in the following new programmes. These represent Wave 2 of the ISCF.

1. Transforming construction

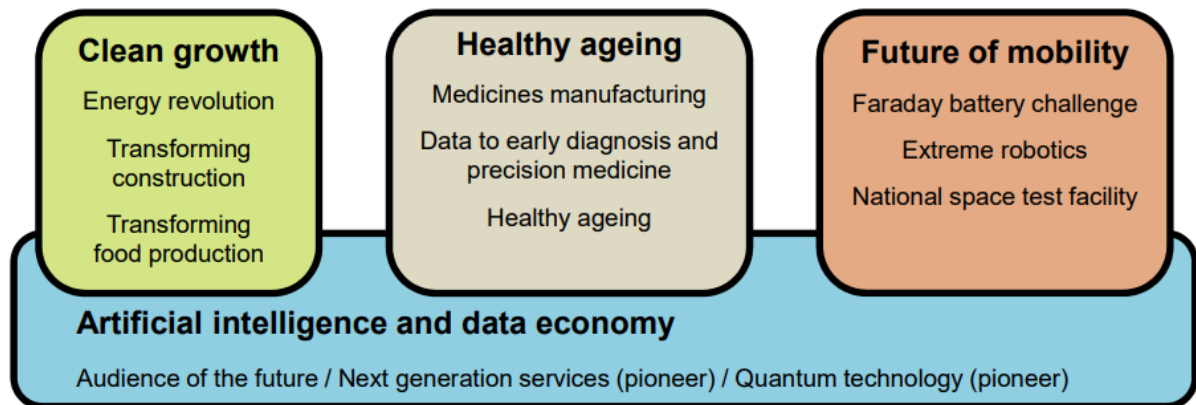
2. Data to early diagnosis & precision medicine
3. Transforming food production
4. Next generation services
5. Energy revolution
6. Healthy ageing
7. Audience of the future
8. Quantum technology

### Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges

There are to be four Grand Challenges which underpin the Strategy. These have been identified as where the UK is already an established world leader:

1. AI and data revolution
2. Clean growth
3. The future of mobility
4. Meeting the needs of an ageing society

The diagram below illustrates how the ISCF Challenges fit with Industrial Strategy Grand Challenges.



### ANNEX THREE: Pitfalls and Top Tips

**Pitfall 1: Added value of GW4**—failing to articulate, and therefore persuade the panel, of the added value of your GW4 partnership.

**Top Tip 1:** ask your team – *What can be achieved as a GW4 collaboration that could not be achieved as a single institution?* Your answer needs to be strongly and clearly articulated in the application, and evidenced where appropriate.

**Pitfall 2: Step-change** –failing to envisage and articulate the potential [Initiator level] or actual [Accelerator level] step change that can be achieved through your GW4 community.

**Top Tip 2:** this connects to Top Tip 1, linking the added value of your GW4 partnership to the step-change made possible by the unique resources available through the GW4 Alliance i.e. what will you do differently: academics, infrastructure, training, external partners etc.

**Pitfall 3: Leveraging external funding & other tangible outcomes:** panel members are often not persuaded on the application's value for money. They are looking for clear anticipated outcomes and realistic, cost-effective plans to achieve them.

**Top Tip 3:** articulate specific details of any potential external funding sources that can be leveraged [amounts, submission deadlines]. Provide the same level of detail for other anticipated outcomes e.g. publications, industry links, staff development etc.

**Pitfall 4: Sustainability** – applications fail to articulate how the momentum and successes achieved will be sustained in the longer term.

**Top Tip 4:** outline a clear sustainability plan. Consider and articulate issues such as on-going GW4 partnership meetings/ communications, future links with industry or other external partners, leveraging further funding, expanding the network, raising the profile and influence of the community both internally and externally.

**Pitfall 5: Assessment criteria and language** – applications fail to meet all the requirements of the Fund and are written in overly complicated, technical language making panel assessment more difficult.

**Top Tip 5:** Optimise your application by reading the '*Programme Guidance*' and '*Application Form Guidance*' documents on the website and by contacting your Programme Manager [contacts on the website] for advice and examples of previously successful applications. Check your application can be understood by someone outside of your discipline.

**Pitfall 6: Fit to GCRF Criteria (for GCRF related applications only)** – failing to clearly demonstrate how the project's main aim is to promote the sustainable growth of countries on the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list, in line with GCRF priorities.

**Top Tip 6:** Specifically identify the DAC listed country/ies and project partners you plan to work with. Ensure that the application clearly articulates research capacity building activities to address specific development issues to promote the welfare and economic development of the defined developing countries. As this may be difficult to implement for Initiator projects, attempt to articulate how the project would be able to deliver in the future.

