

UK-Argentina joint call on AMR in the Environment

Questions and Answers from the webinar

1. How can balanced projects be developed given the unbalanced budgets?
We are looking for proposals with staff effort that is balanced between the two countries. It is acknowledged that the two countries are contributing unequal funds.
2. The application form has "discipline" as almost the first category box: are you really looking for multidisciplinary proposals?
Yes, we are looking for multidisciplinary proposals; the 'discipline' box is a purely administrative label that will have no bearing on the selection of successful proposals.
3. During the exchange visit of the Argentinian postdoctoral researcher in the UK, will just travel/accommodation/subsistence, etc. be paid at 100% full economic cost (FEC) or should their salary during this time be included? How about consumable costs while working with the UK team?
The salary should not be included as this is already paid for through other funding mechanisms. Consumables during their stay in the UK will be paid at 80% FEC by BBSRC.
4. What is the maximum visit duration for the exchange visits of directly allocated (DA) and directly incurred (DI) staff and how many visits can take place? Can any researcher make more than one visit under this category?
There is no maximum trip duration or limit on the number of trips that can take place. Any researchers may make more than one visit, but students cannot be funded under this category.
5. How is "Senior researcher" defined in Argentina?
The researcher grades classed as 'senior researcher' are Independent, Principal and Superior, following the criteria of the CIC (*Carrera del Investigador científico CONICET*) or equivalent for non-CONICET researchers.
6. The funding limit of the Argentinian component is set by the number of senior researchers. Do only senior researchers from CONICET count towards this total?
No, but at least one senior researcher from CONICET must be included in the proposal.
7. How much of each Argentinian senior researcher's time can be allocated to the project in Argentina?
There are no limits, whatever is considered most suitable for the project.
8. If the Argentinian component of the proposal comes from INTA, must the proposal have at least one CONICET researcher to take the (Project Head) administrative role?
Yes. The Project Head must be from CONICET, but other team members can be from any institution.
9. Can an Argentinian researcher be a Project Head on more than one proposal?
No. An Argentinian researcher may be an applicant on multiple proposals, but may only be the Project Head on one proposal.

10. If we have collaborators who hold joint appointments with Argentinian research institutions but are physically based outside of Argentina and the UK, would they be eligible to receive funding for time/resources? Would such collaborators be able to have any travel covered, in order to leverage other resources and understanding that would benefit the projects?
Usual BBSRC and CONICET eligibility rules apply. Joint appointments cannot receive funding for their time spent at the institution not in the UK or Argentina or the resources used at that institution. However, if they are eligible to receive funding, they would be able to receive funding for travel incurred as part of this proposal.
11. For the £1M funding limit of the UK component, the FEC would be somewhere near £1.25M?
Near, yes, but not exactly due to the 100% FEC travel and subsistence rate for the exchange visit.
12. Should we include ideas for integrating research outputs from all successful proposals in the body of the grant or does that come later?
Yes, in the body of the grant.
13. There was mention of money to be ringfenced to allow coordination between various proposals that will be funded. Is that still the case?
Any ringfencing within the total budget will be decided once all the applications have been received and we have seen what they propose in this area. It may not be necessary.
14. Is sample transport an eligible cost? Biologically active samples are costly to transport.
Yes. Remember that a Material Transfer Agreement, an agreement which authorises the exchange of biological material, may be required.
15. Could the cost of sample shipment be covered by the UK budget?
Yes, as long as the samples are being shipped to or from UK researchers.
16. In the ARG resources form, is the Workshops/Meetings section for funding to both host a meeting and to attend this kind of activity?
It is for primarily for organizing workshops/meetings related to the project in Argentina. However, if there is a national activity taking place in Argentina that is related to the scope of this call and a project member wishes to attend, then cost of participation could also be included. However, since this is a bilateral call, funds are primarily for activities that form part of the project.
17. Could you explain further the issue with a possible change in the status of Argentina as a low- and middle-income country (LMIC) and the official development assistance (ODA) requirements? What does it mean in terms of the scope of proposals?
It does not change the scientific scope. It does mean that the outputs of proposals cannot be primarily applicable to Argentina.
18. Some / many issues relating to AMR are fundamental so will relate to high-income countries (HIC) and LMICs. Presumably that shouldn't be an issue?
A proposal that is equally relevant to HICs and LMICs is not ODA compliant and would not proceed to peer review.

19. The LMIC relevance of a proposal would be defined by local context and not necessarily by conceptual / mechanistic differences, so could a proposal still be relevant to HICs whilst focused on LMIC exemplars?

Yes, it could be; but the ODA statement would need to be carefully worded.

20. In the published call document it states that "Vaccine and drug development" is out of scope. In these slides I think it states "vaccines and drug development" are out of scope, which I read to mean a different thing - is research on vaccines completely out of scope?

Yes, this was a mistake on the slides. Vaccine development is out of scope, but vaccines could form part of a proposal.

21. Could you elaborate on the excluded area of "Antimicrobial resistance other than antibacterial resistance"?

Proposals focused on antifungal resistance or antiviral resistance, for example, are out of scope.

22. Please clarify what is meant by applications involving upload of one joint pdf file?

Please submit one bilateral application form pdf, one bilateral justification of resources pdf, one bilateral pathways to impact pdf etc

23. Are letters of support essential to an application?

One from the head of department or institute director at each research organisation involved in the proposal is essential. Further letters are optional but will strengthen your case if it is clear that you need access to a company's premises to carry out, say, sampling.

24. How should letters of support be included? Should they just be included as individual PDFs along with the other application PDFs?

Please assemble all the letters of support into a single pdf

25. Is the assessment panel balanced between UK and Argentina?

Yes, five members will be nominated by each country, although some will come from third countries.