



Global  
Alliance

GCRF AgriFood  
Africa



# GCRF AgriFood Africa Innovation Awards Competition Round 2



Innovate  
UK

Connecting for  
Positive Change

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## Background

The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a £1.5 billion fund to support cutting-edge research which addresses the problems faced by developing countries. GCRF forms part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment and will be awarded in a manner that fits with ODA guidelines. For further information see: **UK Research and Innovation: Global Challenges Research Fund**.

Innovate UK is delivering a £26m 5-year GCRF AgriFood Africa programme, following on from activities initiated through **The Department for International Development (DFID) now replaced by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)**. KTN is delivering the Dissemination and Collaboration element of this programme. As part of this, KTN is currently funding 12 Innovation Awards from Round 1.

KTN is pleased to announce a further call for GCRF AgriFood Africa Innovation Awards as a means to encourage UK research partners, including Universities and Research Technology Organisations (RTOs), to address AgriFood challenges in Africa. In total, up to £800k will be available to support a maximum of 20 awards, which will be committed over two competition rounds. The call for Round 2 will open on **September 15th 2020**, with up to 8 awards available. The deadline for applications is Midnight **Tuesday 10th November 2020**.

## What is a GCRF AgriFood Africa Innovation Award?

This call will provide funds to a UK research partner for a collaborative project to address the AgriFood challenges of an African partner. These Awards are intended to help resource small confidence building measures, employing research and innovation within the scope as

outlined below. Projects must be between an African partner and a UK research partner that is likely to lead to a longer-term relationship and follow-on projects.

Highly innovative applications from partners who have not worked together before are especially welcome as are projects that promote diversity and inclusion. We are looking to support a portfolio of projects that address a variety of AgriFood and nutrition challenges relevant to Africa, across a range of technology areas, market sectors and territories.

## Value of Awards

The grants, which are up to £40,000 (including any applicable VAT), are awarded to the UK research partner to tackle a problem relevant to the African partner(s). Awards are to be funded at 80% FEC, so total project costs may equal up to £50,000 (but only up to £40,000 will be reimbursed). We encourage applications where costs are allocated for the African partners' contribution (administered via the awarded UK institution) and these costs can be included at FEC for the African partner within the £40,000 total funding available. To further meaningful collaborations, we request that applicants ring-fence a sum of £5,000 to support travel of the UK partner to the African partner's country. International air travel should be by economy class for flights up to 6 hours and premium economy for flights over 6 hours. These awards will NOT support travel in business class/first class. Should Covid-19 restrictions continue, this figure can be revised further to a discussion with KTN.



The funding will be awarded to the UK research partner's institution. All work must be completed within 12 months of the agreed start date of the project. A start date ordinarily within 3 months of award of the grant will be agreed between the KTN and the successful applicants. Due to the Covid-19 situation this start date may be extended to within 6 months of the award being granted and if agreed by KTN. All expenditure must be clearly accounted for in a short final report produced and verified by the partners before the final payment will be made.

There are up to 8 awards available in this final round of Innovation Awards.

## Scope and Eligibility

The collaborations supported by a GCRF AgriFood Africa Innovation Award must comprise a defined piece of research and innovation work by the UK and African partner or partners, for example feasibility studies, industrial research projects or social science studies into barriers to the adoption of or investment in technologies and innovations in the agricultural sector.

These awards will take innovative ideas from any sector or discipline. Ideas must show the potential for a positive impact on poverty through the uptake of agricultural and food systems technology and innovation. The scope includes:

- primary crop and livestock production, including aquaculture
- improving the availability and accessibility of safe, healthy and nutritious foods
- challenges in food processing, distribution or storage, and value addition (such as through a change in the physical state or form of the product)
- non-food uses of crops, excluding ornamentals and crops for energy use

Your project's innovations must:

- be sustainable in the context of environmental challenges such as climate change and resource scarcity
- minimise negative effects such as pollution, food loss and waste
- promote safe, healthy and nutritious diets

Agriculture and food systems are changing rapidly, which has the potential to positively impact diets and stakeholder livelihoods. Uptake of new technology and innovation in the area of agriculture and food systems is currently low in developing countries, particularly Africa. Your project proposal must show benefits to an African country's agriculture and/or food systems to contribute to sustainable, healthy, safe and nutritious diets. It must clearly demonstrate a research or innovation component.

Applications must be led by an eligible Principal Investigator in the UK. The call is open to individuals and organisations normally eligible to apply to the UK research councils for research grants\*. Assessment of the 'Evidence of Expertise' section of the application will take the applicant's career stage into account.

UK academic applicants are welcome to include a relevant UK industry partner in addition to African partner(s). However, the UK industry partner will not be eligible to receive funding through this award.

\* Early career researchers who are interested in applying for these awards but who do not fit these criteria are encouraged to contact KTN ([gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org](mailto:gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org)) about their eligibility. We are happy to discuss arrangements for early career applicants who have the support of a Principal Investigator and their institution.

## Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Gender Equality Act (GEA)

Your project and its outcomes must fit within the Official Development Assistance (ODA) criteria and align with the Gender Equality Act (GEA).

Your application must demonstrate how the primary benefit from your project will contribute to international development outcomes, specifically:

- enhanced food and nutrition security
- welfare of the poor in urban and rural areas in developing African countries

Activities carried out in the UK must be clearly relevant to delivering impact in the country of the African partner. Any benefits to the UK must be secondary in nature and result from delivering the primary benefit. Your proposal must clearly demonstrate how it will provide impact for developing countries.

Men and women experience poverty differently and face different obstacles to moving out of poverty. A significant gender gap in agriculture means women have unequal access to and control over productive assets and income. This is despite contributing a significant share of agricultural labour.

If your project is not sensitive to how this affects agricultural productivity, marketing and processing, the impact will be limited and potentially exacerbate gender inequalities. You should not assume that the household is a unit in which everything is pooled and shared and in which one person makes decisions on behalf of all household members.

Your proposal should recognise that to promote gender equality and empower girls and women is not only a goal in its own right. It is often a means to improving agricultural productivity or achieving food and nutrition security.

Further information on Gender Equality can be found here: <https://www.ukri.org/research/global-challenges-research-fund/gender-equality-and-international-development-research-and-innovation/>.

## Projects we will NOT fund

We will not fund projects that cover:

- forestry or ornamentals
- wild-capture fisheries
- equine
- crops for energy production

## African Partner Eligibility Criteria

The African partner(s) can be industrial companies (SME or larger), agricultural cooperatives/farming groups or from CGIAR or similar centres located in an eligible country. Multiple African partners are permitted but not required. If you are unsure about the eligibility of a potential partner, please check their eligibility with KTN at prior to submission and no later than Monday 2nd November 2020, by emailing [gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org](mailto:gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org).

## Eligible Countries

- Angola
- Benin
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cameroon
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Congo (Brazzaville)
- Congo, Democratic Republic of
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Gambia, The
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mozambique
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- Sao Tome and Principe
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Tanzania
- Togo
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

## The Assessment Process

Allocation of the awards will be determined by a group comprising staff from the KTN AgriFood team, independent experts with experience in AgriFood systems as well as representatives from Innovate UK.

## Proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Relevance to the applicable remits specified in this call document
- Research Partner's track record, taking career stage into account
- Potential for the creation of new long term relationships between the partners
- Potential for follow-up projects and activity
- Quality of the work proposed
- Value for money
- Value of the clearly defined project deliverable(s) and contribution to the African partner and wider African AgriFood sector
- The contribution of the African partner to the project (In-kind or cash)

## Within the remits described above, priority will be given to proposals that:

- Increase the pace of development and scale of uptake of AgriFood systems and innovation in Africa
- Take science through to impact and application to benefit African agriculture, food systems and nutrition
- Work towards 'solving' a technical problem for the African partner
- Will result in applications for funding of new collaborative research or technology transfer projects. Examples might include the preparation of an application for an Agri-Tech Catalyst grant, or similar funding scheme.
- Adapt an existing technology for a new application
- Help improve an African partner's capability to innovate
- Empower girls and women in agriculture and food systems.



# Application Procedure

**Step 1:** Carefully read these application guidelines specified in this document.

**Step 2:** Download and complete the case for support document **here**. This document will outline the key project details and case for funding. This will form the main part of your application, so we recommend you start this as soon as possible.

**Step 3:** Once your case for support document is ready, fill out the online application form, which can be accessed **here**. Make sure you have partners' contact details to hand as all fields are required. We recommend that you do not leave this to the last minute!

**Step 4:** Attach your case for support document (the attachment must be a Word Document, NOT a PDF file) and press 'submit'.

Only applications submitted by midnight on **Tuesday 10th November 2020** will be considered. Applications must be submitted by the UK research lead partner. The award is only payable to the UK research partner.

Applicants will receive notification of the outcome of their application on or before **Tuesday 15th December 2020**. If your application is successful, subject to verification of status, you will be offered a grant of up to £40,000 (including any applicable VAT) to carry out the work proposed in your application.

## Administration of Projects

Projects must be completed within 12 months from the agreed start date of the project. There will be no negotiation on this deadline and extensions will not be granted. If a project is not completed in this time the funding award will be withdrawn.

The grant is payable in arrears and will be paid on receipt of a report of the work undertaken, written by the knowledge base partner and signed by the representative of the African partner. There will be two payments made. The first payment will be made 6 months into the project, subject to submission of a mid-term report and demonstration of project progress. The second payment will be made at the end of the project and upon receipt of the project final report. A template for the short report will be made available with the offer letter. A version of the report will be published on the KTN website for this project, in full or in part, subject to exclusion of sensitive or confidential information. A short public summary of about 250 words must also be provided.

New foreground IP is unlikely to result from this short project alone however we recommend an agreement is made between partners on likely arrangements that can then be the basis for a formal agreement for any further project applications. This latter agreement should set out the basis of their collaboration, including arrangements for ownership and management of intellectual property and rights to its exploitation. It is the partners' collective responsibility to put in place such an agreement.

Any collaboration agreement should be within the spirit of Official Development Assistance and must not inappropriately restrict use of outcomes of the research by potential beneficiaries in any partner DAC country. Any licence(s) granted and subsequent commercial exploitation of the research outcomes are expected to be managed in a way that is consistent with the principles of Global Access (as exemplified by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (<http://globalaccess.gatesfoundation.org>),

Further information: To discuss potential projects, please contact the AgriFood team at KTN: [gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org](mailto:gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org).

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q – Do I require an African partner?  
A – Yes, every project must include an African partner, in collaboration with a UK university/RTO.
2. Q – What type of African partners are eligible?  
A – African industry partners of any size are eligible i.e. both SMEs and Large Companies.

African partners from CGIAR or similar centres may also be eligible - please contact KTN to confirm an individual institution's eligibility via [gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org](mailto:gcrf.agrifood@ktn-uk.org). Applicants must contact the KTN no later than 2nd November 2020 to explain why the non-industry partner they propose should be considered, and how they will disseminate benefits and achieve impact to the AgriFood industry base in Africa.

## Animal Welfare

You must make sure that all your proposed research, both in the UK and internationally, complies with the principles of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council's (BBSRC) and other UK funders' common guidance on 'Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research'.

Projects likely to directly compromise farm animal welfare outcomes will not be funded. Projects likely to benefit animal welfare will be viewed favourably. UK institutions should be aware of the extract from the guidance: "When collaborating with other laboratories, or where animal facilities are provided by third parties, researchers and the local ethics committee in the UK should satisfy themselves that welfare standards consistent with the principles of UK legislation (e.g. the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986), and set out in this guidance, are applied and maintained. Where there are significant deviations, prior approval from the funding body should be sought and agreed."

For more information, visit the **GCRF AgriFood Africa Programme** page.