

## INTRODUCTION

The Newton Fund is a £375 million fund (£75 million a year for 5 years starting from April 2014). Through the Newton Fund, the UK will use its strength in research and innovation to **promote the economic development and social welfare of partner countries**. The Fund is part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the commitment to spend 0.7% of Gross National Income on development aid. The primary focus is to develop partner countries research and innovation capacity for long-term sustainable growth.

By working together on bi-lateral and multi-lateral programmes with a research and innovation focus, the UK will **build strong, sustainable, systemic relationships** with partner countries. This will support the **continued excellence** of the UK research base and innovation ecosystem and **act as a golden key** to unlock opportunities for wider collaboration and trade.

We have identified that **£2 million per year of the UK funding could be available for collaboration with Thailand**. The intention is that this funding is matched by Thailand, possibly including through foundations, multi-lateral organisations or corporate partners. This will provide a genuine partnership and we would like the Fund to be called after eminent scientists / statesman / woman from the UK and from Thailand. The chosen UK scientist for the name of the fund will be Newton.

The Fund will cover three broad categories of activity:

- **People:** capacity building, people exchange and joint centres;
- **Programmes:** research collaborations on development topics; and
- **Translation:** innovation partnerships.

It will support projects across agreed priority areas. These are likely to include:

- joint research on development topics;
- student and researcher fellowships and mobility schemes;
- challenge funds to develop innovative solutions on topics of interest to developing nations;
- science and innovation capacity building.

## PEOPLE ACTIVITIES

- **STEM Education Programme:** Support STEM curriculum development at the schools level
- **Newton PhD Programme** consists of three main elements: PhD partnerships, PhD scholarships and PhD placements
- **Newton Researcher Mobility Scheme:**
  - International Collaboration programme: Support for researchers – early career and established – to undertake research collaboration placements in UK
  - Researcher Links Programme: workshops and travel grants for early career researchers
- **Newton Advanced Fellowships:** Early to mid-career fellowships for group leaders to establish their links with the best research groups in the UK
- **Newton International Fellowships:** Two year fellowships in the UK for early career researchers
- **Professional Development and Engagement Programme:** Supports a high quality research environment that is responsive to development needs and delivers research outputs that benefit the economy and society. Programme focuses on scientific professional development, leadership in research governance and management and community engagement
- **Technical Training and Employability Programme:** Building the science and innovation workforce outside academia

## RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

**Collaborative Research Fund, Joint Centres & Innovation Infrastructure Programme:** Fund joint research projects and establish joint centres

Initial themes which our Newton programme with Thailand could focus on are given below, though we will need to refine this list and add items during further discussions with Thailand Delivery Partners:

- **Health and life sciences:** Reducing the dual burden of infectious and non-communicable disease on the fragile health systems of South-East Asia, including addressing the increasing threat of anti-microbial resistance and neglected tropical diseases.
- **Improving environmental resilience and energy security:** Improving understanding and mitigating the human and economic impacts of natural hazards, from flooding to drought, seismic activity and typhoons. Reducing carbon emissions by improving provision of renewable energy, including developing offshore technology, minimising negative impacts of biofuels and ensuring safety for nuclear power where deployed.
- **Future cities:** Addressing the challenges and maximising the opportunities posed by the rapid urbanisation in South-East Asia, through support to the development of physical and virtual infrastructure and better understanding human impacts. A recent World Bank report identified that cities in South-East Asia are growing twice as fast as in the rest of the world.
- **Agri-tech:** The region includes some of the leading global rice exporting countries, such as Thailand and , as well as large areas devoted to palm oil and rubber plantations in Malaysia and Thailand. Increasing agricultural productivity and exports have contributed significantly to economic growth, but food security is a pressing issue as demand is increasing dramatically and production is likely to be hindered by the impacts of climate change.
- **Digital, innovation and creativity:** There is strong interest from the region in the use of web technology, data analytics and creative industries as drivers of disruptive innovations that can deliver disproportionate benefits to the most deprived. Collaboration on approaches to big data and analytics could drive a wide range of applications that would deliver social and economic development.

## TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES

- **Newton Institutional Links:** Support UK-partner country partnerships around research and innovation
- **Research & Innovation Bridges:** Support a range of activities to build joint collaboration in the translation of research. This could fund initial scoping seminar and workshops to joint academic centres to large scale research and innovation projects.
- **Global Innovation Capacity Building – Government and Innovation Agencies:** Supports talent development in government and innovation agencies that lead on innovation policy and programme development in-country
- **Innovation Capacity Building – Entrepreneurs and SMEs:** Supports the development of entrepreneurial knowledge and capability in science and innovation related small and medium sized enterprises

## UK DELIVERY PARTNERS

For the UK side the fund will provide a mechanism to join up engagement and individual activities will be managed by a core group of UK Delivery Partners:

- the **Academies** which consist of the Royal Society (RS), the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng), the British Academy (BA) and the Academy of Medical Sciences
- **British Council;**
- **Research Councils UK**, the strategic partnership of the UK's seven Research Councils - Arts and Humanities (AHRC), Biotechnology and Biological Sciences (BBSRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPSRC), Economic and Social Research (ESRC), Medical Research (MRC), Natural Environment (NERC), and Science and Technology Facilities (STFC)
- **Innovate UK**, and
- **Met Office**

## CONTACT

Ms. Pijarana Samukkan

Research and Innovation Programme Manager

British Embassy

14 Wireless Road, Lumpini, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330

Tel: +66(0)2 305 8280

e-mail: pijarana.samukkan@fco.gov.uk