Guidance for invited applicants

Unlocking the Potential for Groundwater for the Poor (UPGro) – sub-Saharan Africa

A social and natural science approach to enabling sustainable use of groundwater for the benefit of the poor

2014 Consortium Grants – Full Proposals

Critical Deadlines:
Full Proposals to be submitted by 19th June 2014 16:00 (4pm) UK Local Time (BST/GMT+1/UTC+1)

Information about your application, including the personal information provided on the forms, will be processed and stored electronically by the UPGro Secretariat and representatives of UPGro's Funders (NERC, ESRC and DFID). The information contained in your application may be passed on to external reviewers in confidence. Reviewers will be asked to destroy information after the review and selection process is complete.

Your application and personal information will be stored by the UPGro programme for management purposes but will not be shared with other organisations outside the UPGro partnership. We will use details provided in the application for correspondence about the call and may also use this information for future analyses of the performance of the programme.

By submitting your application to the UPGro Programme you have indicated your acceptance of these data protection terms and conditions.

UP Gro Unlocking the Potential of Groundwater for the Poor

UKaid from the British people

E·S·R·C ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

NERC SCIENCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Summary

The Unlocking the Potential of Groundwater for the Poor (UPGro) research programme is funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). UPGro is an international programme funding interdisciplinary social and natural science research generating evidence and innovative tools to enable developing countries and their partners in sub-Saharan Africa to use groundwater in a sustainable way for the benefit of the poor.

This call for UPGro 2014 Consortium Grants provides an opportunity for the world's best researchers to undertake large-scale, complex and interdisciplinary social and natural science research addressing the programme's aim of enabling sustainable use of groundwater for the benefit of the poor. It is also an opportunity to further develop interdisciplinary teams that bring together developing and developed country scientists.

There is no requirement for applicants to have applied for or received funding from the previous UPGro Catalyst Grant round in order to participate in this or any future calls within this programme.

Applications are invited for funding of up to £1.9M Full Economic Cost (FEC) per consortium. This call has a total available budget of up to £7.6M. Projects will be funded for a maximum duration of four years with an expected start date prior to 31st January 2015.

Applicants are expected to submit proposals which address at least two of the three UPGro research themes: Understanding the Resource; Governance, Institutions and Access; and Impacts of Future Trends, and include a strong focus on both physical science and social aspects.

Projects will be selected through a two stage process. This document describes the second stage of the process: submissions of Full Proposals. Only invited applicants may submit proposals to this call.

Full Proposals must be submitted via the Joint electronic Submissions (Je-S) system by 16:00 BST/GMT+1/UTC+1 on 19th June 2014

Abbreviations

BST	British Summer Time
Co-I	Co-Investigator
CV	Curriculum Vitae/Resume
DFID	Department for International Development
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FAQ	Frequently asked questions
FEC	Full Economic Cost
FTE	Full time equivalent
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
HEI	Higher Education Institution
Je-S	Joint Electronic Submission
LIC	Low-Income Countries
MIC	Middle Income Countries
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PDRA	Post-Doctoral Research Assistant
PEB	Programme Executive Board
PI	Principal Investigator
RC	Research Council
RCUK	Research Councils UK
RO	Research Organisation
TRAC	Transparent Approach to Costing
UPGro	Unlocking the Potential of Groundwater for the Poor
UTC	Coordinated Universal Time

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Consortium Grants Call

1.1.1 Applicants should be aware that this document only describes the process of the submission and review of the Full Proposals in the UPGro Consortium Grants Call. All information on the UPGro programme, the UPGro programme components, important terminology, the research themes and the scope of this call remain the same as in the Announcement of Opportunity for the Outline Proposals and therefore this document should be read in conjunction with that[1]. Any duplication between the two documents is to emphasise important requirements.

1.2 The Research Themes

1.2.1 The UPGro programme seeks to address three main themes and applicants **are required to submit proposals that cut across at least two of the themes and include both natural and social or economic sciences research**.

Theme 1. Understanding the Resource:

1.2.2 Research should respond to the demand for improved understanding of groundwater availability in SSA. Key knowledge gaps which could be addressed include:

- *Improved understanding of recharge processes, including flow and storage mechanisms at local and catchment scale*. Critical advances are needed in the understanding of the fundamental recharge processes across these different African environments and how these will be affected by changes in climate change and land use. The importance of episodic, highly intense, potentially localised rainfall needs to be better understood.
- *Improved knowledge of groundwater/surface water interactions*. Research is required to better characterise groundwater to surface water and inter-aquifer interactions in terms of quality and quantity, together with increased understanding of recharge mechanisms, to inform decisions on water storage via methods such as managed aquifer recharge or surface storage. Better integration of groundwater into land surface models, such as JULES[2], is also needed.
- *Improved knowledge of groundwater quality*. Research is needed to understand the risks to the quality of the groundwater resource to avoid resource degradation and risks to human and ecosystem health. The processes by which naturally occurring contaminates are mobilised and/or pathogenic organisms come to contaminate groundwater and the pathways that lead to the uptake by humans are of particular focus.

Theme 2. Governance, Institutions and Access:

1.2.3 Research across this theme is expected to generate and enhance evidence and frameworks for understanding the social, economic and political dynamics surrounding groundwater use. It should focus on the impact of policies, institutions, regulations, customs and informal social arrangements associated with groundwater use and also propose approaches or models to inform the design of new policies. It is recognised that in addressing the social and political dimensions of water use, projects may need to consider the full range of available water resources. Areas of research might include:

- *Impacts of governance and political economy.* What is the impact of current local, regional, national and international governance/institutional and other political economy processes and incentive structures on groundwater resources, their exploitation, recharge and sustainable use? What are the implications of formal and informal

[1] http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/funded/programmes/upgro/news/ao2014/

[2] JULES is the Joint UK Land Environment Simulator and is the land surface model used in Meteorological and Climate models.

mechanisms for groundwater governance on broader social, political and economic processes?

- *Ownership models*. What is the role of industry, and in particular foreign companies and investment and their interests in land-groundwater interfaces? What are the implications of the accumulation of ownership of water rights and access in the hands of a decreasing number of organisations and/or stakeholders?
- *Approaches to governance/institutions*. What governance/institutional approaches (at different levels including community and local/national government) help to improve access and management of groundwater – including issues of ownership, willingness to pay, regulation, subsidies, enforcement – and how do they work for different groups in society, e.g. women, ethnic minorities and the poorest, particularly in the context of states with weak or unstable political regimes or those suffering from conflict?
- *Impacts of non-water related policies*. What are the impacts of non-water related policies, regulatory regimes etc. on groundwater access and use, and conversely what impacts do water related policies and regulations have on broader aspects of governance and practice at a local level?
- *Behavioural change*. How do we understand the ways individuals and communities value groundwater and make decisions regarding its use? What factors influence this and how can policies and interventions bring about positive change to decisions about groundwater use? What behaviours might explain why some people currently do not have access, and how do such behaviours affect demand?
- *Tools for decision makers*. What are the tools, models, diagnostic frameworks, metrics and other approaches which need to be tested and developed to help decision makers at different levels take action to access, manage and protect groundwater as appropriate? How are these used and what other factors influence their use?

Theme 3. Impacts of Future Trends:

1.2.4 Research across this theme will contribute to identifying the key drivers and stressors which might affect the availability of groundwater and how these drivers and stressors interact. Studies should focus on clear trends which will affect the sustainable use of groundwater in the next 10 to 20 years and, where appropriate, up to a maximum of 50 years in to the future. It should examine how future trends might differentially affect different groups (for example, women or marginalised groups) and their access to groundwater resources for their livelihoods. The research should aim to provide new knowledge at the time and space scales that will enable policy makers, communities and individuals to make informed decisions about how to use groundwater sustainably now, and in future decades. Research should also aim to integrate novel natural science and novel social science.

1.2.5 The interaction between these drivers and stressors may give rise to unforeseen consequences, and therefore they cannot be considered in isolation. Examples of such drivers and stressors include, but may not be limited to:

- implications of changes in land use and ownership;
- population growth and changing demographics;
- the finite nature and renewability of the resource;
- changing rainfall patterns;
- the balance of rural and urban development;
- new technologies or water management approaches (for example, managed aquifer recharge);
- rates of extraction and changing demands on and limits to groundwater abstraction (for example, through increased demand for irrigated agriculture); and

- the potential effects of increased industrialisation in both urban and rural contexts.

1.3 The Scope of the Consortium Grants Call

1.3.1 The goal of the UPGro 2014 Consortium Grants is to fund large-scale, interdisciplinary social and natural science research projects to develop new knowledge and build capacity to enable developing countries in SSA to benefit from the use of groundwater in a sustainable way. This will also provide the opportunity to develop interdisciplinary teams bringing together developed and developing country scientists.

1.3.2 The successful research projects will take an interdisciplinary approach, combining social and natural sciences, to address the themes of the UPGro programme.

UPGro 2014 Consortium Grant applications must:

- be interdisciplinary in nature and include both **social** and **natural** science;
- include clear hypotheses and objectives that determine the design of the project, including specifying the need for the research and the relevance (whom it will benefit);
- work across the three main themes, incorporating at least two;
- include clear rationale for the methods proposed;
- include developing countries and collaborations with developed countries are encouraged;
- deliver impacts that will benefit poor people living in sub-Saharan Africa.

1.4 Poverty Focus of the Research and its Location

1.4.1 UPGro's research needs to contribute to knowledge and evidence which will help to reduce poverty and through this improve the lives of poor people, and must be applicable to those living in Low-Income Countries (LIC) in SSA (see Annex 1 for definitions).

1.4.2 UPGro considers that poverty is multidimensional, going beyond single measures of income or consumption, and recognises that poverty is experienced differently according to context. UPGro therefore expects researchers to adopt a multidimensional understanding of poverty, and one that is relevant to the specific research context.

1.4.3 UPGro's research needs to identify the groups of poor people most likely to be the ultimate beneficiaries and whose lives should be improved through the application of UPGro's research results. Proposals for UPGro funding should identify these groups *and* describe their current poverty status.

It is a requirement for funding that ***UPGro 2014 Consortium Grants demonstrate how the results of proposed research will have Pathways to Impact that can improve the lives of poor people in low-income countries***, even if some of the research is conducted in one or more middle-income countries.

1.5 Where can Research be Conducted?

1.5.1 The results of the research should benefit the countries of SSA (see Annex 1 for definitions). **The primary focus of the research is in Low Income Countries in SSA. However, research may be undertaken in Middle Income Countries (MIC) in SSA where there is a clear impact of the research on the poor and applicability to low-income countries.** Where appropriate, research may usefully draw lessons from experiences of groundwater management in other regions and look at their applicability to priority areas in Africa.

1.5.2 There are no other restrictions on where researchers are located or their nationality. Similarly, there are no geographic restrictions on where research institutions are based, as long as they meet the administrative eligibility requirements for funding. However, UPGro projects are intended to have a clear and significant role for developing country researchers and/or institutions. This should represent meaningful engagement which supports capacity development for all partners.

Proposals will need to describe both what their projects will do to ensure that poor people living in sub-Saharan Africa will benefit from their research as part of their Case for Support and how the research will support the development of research capacity in SSA.

It is a requirement for the call that linkages with SSA institutions are established. This should include both research institutions and the organisations where the intended users of the outcomes of the research, such as decision- and policy-makers, are based.

For the purpose of this call, the term developing country has been defined to include all Low Income Countries. The income status of countries can be checked on the World Bank's website which lists current income classifications or Annex 1.

It is not essential for project teams to include researchers or research institutions based in the United Kingdom or any other developed country.

UPGro actively encourages international collaboration with academic and non-academic organisations and/or community groups and the active involvement of developing country researchers and institutions in the design and implementation of projects.

2 Demonstrating the Pathway to Impact

2.1.1 UPGro's projects are expected to deliver *both* academic impact (e.g. research papers, significant new data) and a pathway to significant and sustainable development impact. Development impact from UPGro projects will be measured by the way the research is directly relevant to, and thus is able to demonstrate, likely contributions to the sustainable alleviation of poverty, improved health and well-being, and creation of new opportunities for people, particularly the poor, in low-income countries to benefit from sustainable growth in the global economy.

2.1.2 The requirement to demonstrate the potential for impact will extend to all projects commissioned under the UPGro programme, including the Consortium Grants. It is our expectation that these awards will contribute new knowledge and understanding. They will also provide an opportunity for the development of research partnerships between developed and developing country partners.

2.1.3 Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their team(s) of researchers intend to deliver academic impact from their research. All projects are required to demonstrate their potential to produce research that can be published in high-profile international peer-reviewed academic journals. Where possible, publications should be published in open access format (see Sections 3.7.11 and 3.7.12).

2.1.4 In addition to peer-reviewed publications, it is expected that projects will also deliver academic impact through the generation of new high-quality datasets as well as new tools, approaches and methods (including models). All new data should be placed in the public domain, including where possible being deposited in one of the UK Research Council data centres[3].

2.1.5 UPGro's research is expected to help decision- and policy-makers to implement better development strategies and processes that will lead to benefits for poor people and poverty reduction alongside sustainable management of groundwater resources. UPGro's research should also empower poor people and communities, especially those in low-income countries, to improve their own lives and assist them in coping with a changing world.

2.1.6 Effective engagement with potential users of UPGro research will be an important factor contributing to the subsequent development impact pathways of all UPGro projects. This may require projects to work with a range of knowledge intermediaries, NGOs and government departments and agencies as well as communities and other stakeholders. Consideration should also be given to how the findings of the research can be made available to interested parties in the target communities of the research.

2.1.7 Applicants will be expected to detail their plans for achieving impact in the Pathways to Impact statement, including suggestions for working with the UPGro Knowledge Broker and other Consortium Grants to maximise value for money across the programme (see Section 3.8 for further details).

[3] http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-esrc/information/data-policy.aspx
http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/data/policy/

3 Summary of the Full Proposal Application Process

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The UPGro 2014 Consortium Grants will provide funding of up to £1.9M for a maximum duration of four years. It is expected that grants will start before the 31st of January 2015 (see full timetable in Section 11). This budget limit refers to the total (100%) financial costs incurred to undertake the project (including overheads and any NERC facility costs). This is known as the full economic cost (FEC).

3.1.2 The application process for funding of UPGro 2014 Consortium Grants will involve two distinct stages, which are designed to support potential applicants to develop excellent proposals relevant to the call. Submission of Outline Consortium Grant Proposals, now concluded, constituted the first stage of the process. The second stage of the process is the submission of full proposals which is detailed below; only applicants successful at the outline stage are eligible to submit full proposals.

3.2 UPGro 2014 Consortium Grant Full Proposals (Closing Date 19 June 2014, 16:00 UK local time (BST/GMT+1/UTC+1)

3.2.1 Full proposals will need to be submitted through the Joint Electronic Submission (Je-S) system (https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk) (see Annex 4).

3.3 Summary of Required Documents

3.3.1 The application has several elements, some of these must be completed online (e.g. the pro-forma), while others should be completed offline and uploaded as attachments to the Je-S form.

3.3.2 **The pro-forma** is an online form comprising a number of structured boxes for key information. It will need to be completed by all PIs, and is common to all applications.

3.3.3 All applications must be completed in English and must be in single-spaced typescript of minimum font size 11 point (Arial or equivalent), with margins of at least 2 cm. References should also be at least 11 point font.

3.3.4 The elements summarised below are completed off-line and uploaded as attachments to the pro-forma. They are described in more detail in Sections 3.6 – 3.10 and are summarised below. **Page limits are absolute and any applicants which exceed limits will be rejected.**

- The **Case for Support** is comprised of three parts:
  - o **Previous Track record of organisations** – up to two sides A4 for each component application submitted in the proposed Consortium; this section includes brief information and assurances of the organisational and fiduciary competencies, if applicable. *(Submitted by each component application).*
  - o **Description of proposed research** - up to 16 sides A4. *(Common to all proposals in a joint submission – submitted by lead only).*
  - o A **Data Management plan** – up to 1 side A4; this section includes information about how the project will manage data produced. *(Common to all proposals in a joint submission – submitted by lead only).*
- **Justification of Resources** requested – up to 2 sides A4 for each component application; this section includes details of how projects will deal with fluctuating currency markets (see Section 5.7). *(Submitted by each component application*).
- **Pathways to Impact*** attachment – up to 2 sides A4 (see Section 5.8). *(Common to all proposals in a joint application – submitted by lead only).*

- **CVs** for all named research staff: PIs, Co-Is, Researcher Co-Is, named Researchers and Visiting Researchers (up to 2 sides A4 for each CV, and should include current and previous positions, key relevant publications and research funding obtained). It is recommended that CVs use a consistent template within each project.
- **Letters of support** from any named Project Partners – up to 2 sides A4 each (see Section 3.10). *(Common to all proposals in a joint application – submitted by lead only).*
- Application forms for any NERC Facility/Ship-time requested (only applicable for organisations normally eligible for Research Council funding).
- A business case for any single items of equipment costing more than the OJEU threshold (up to 2 sides A4). This should be accompanied by three equipment quotations. The current OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) threshold at the time of application can be found at http://www.ojeu.eu/Thresholds.aspx.

3.4 Je-S Pro-forma

3.4.1 In order to prepare a Je-S proposal submission, the person preparing the proposal has to log onto Je-S and create a new proposal. **Note that this person must have previously created an individual Je-S account for themselves. This should be done in advance of the application deadline, as there may be some delay in the approval of an individual Je-S account.**

3.4.2 Full step-by-step guidance on how to complete a Je-S application form can be found on the Je-S website.

3.4.3 On logging into Je-S, follow this procedure:

- Click on ‘Documents’, then create a ‘New Document’.
- Click on ‘Call Search’ and enter ‘UPGro’.
- This will bring up the link to the current UPGro call.

3.4.4 Alternatively you can follow this procedure:

- Select the Research Council – NERC.
- Select Document type ‘Standard Proposal’.
- Select Scheme - ‘Directed - International’.
- Select call ‘UPGro Consortium Grants JUN14’.

3.4.5 Please note that applications submitted to the wrong call cannot be considered. **Please ensure that you have selected the current UPGro call, entitled ‘UPGro Consortium Grants JUN14’.**

3.4.6 The following information should be common to all application pro-formas in a joint project proposal:

- Title of proposal.
- Objectives.
- Summary.
- Academic Beneficiaries.

3.4.7 Some information is common to the whole project but if submitting a joint proposal should only be included in the lead Research Organisation application pro-forma or submitted as attachments to the **lead Research Organisation application only:**

- Nominated referees.
- Project Partners.

- Letters of support from Project Partners.
- Description of Proposed Research (Part 2 of the Case for Support, up to 16 sides A4 – common to all component applications in a joint application).
- Data Management Plan (Part 3 of the Case for Support, up to 1 side A4 – common to all component applications in a joint application). This should include data management, participant responsibilities, and scheduling chart.
- Pathways to Impact (up to 2 sides A4 – common to all component applications in a joint application).

3.4.8 The attachments named in 3.4.7 must not be submitted to any component application. Where such an attachment is a mandatory requirement of the Je-S system, a dummy attachment must be submitted. This should be annotated with "Refer to Lead Research Organisation Application".

3.4.9 For **each other component application** (if submitting a joint proposal), we require as separate attachments or in the relevant pro-forma:

- A separate Justification of Resources. This should be attached to the relevant component Research Organisation application (up to 2 sides A4 for each individual component application) and should provide a justification for all funds requested on that component application.
- CVs for named research staff (including PIs, Co-Is and Researcher Co-Investigators) and Visiting Researchers named on that component application (up to 2 sides A4 for each CV). These should be attached to the relevant component Research Organisation application.
- A separate Previous Track Record for each component application (Part 1 of the Case for Support), and include details of the PI and Co-I organisations named on that component. This should not exceed 2 sides A4 for each component application and should be uploaded as an "other attachment" by component applications, when submitting via Je-S.
- Business case and equipment quotations for items costing more than the OJEU threshold.

3.4.10 Applicants should include information of Project Partners listed individually within their pro-forma, and any in kind and or leveraged support that has been secured for the proposal.

3.5 Project Finances

3.5.1 The financial cost of the proposed project should be identified through the following components:

- Je-S pro-forma.
- Justification of Resources document.

3.5.2 All applicants should enter the full economic costs of the proposed research into the budget sections of the Je-S form. **All costs should be in pounds sterling (£).**

3.5.3 The budget limits on grant applications under this scheme refer to the total cost of the project – known as the **full economic cost (FEC)**. All of the UK Research Councils research grant applications are awarded on a full economic cost (FEC) basis. This will apply to UPGro.

3.5.4 FOR INTEGRATED PROJECT GRANTS, THE FULL ECONOMIC COST (FEC) OF ALL SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS COMPRISING A RESEARCH PROJECT MUST NOT EXCEED THE MAXIMUM BUDGET OF £1.9M STERLING. *That is, if a project comprising of three Research Organisations plans to bid for £1.9M as a joint grant (i.e. with separate components), then the costs from the three organisations applications combined should not* *exceed this figure. Note, for example, that if each organisation claims £1.9M in costs on their application, this would show on our system as the project bidding for £5.7M and would result in all three being rejected.*

3.5.5 Research grant funds are provided to meet the costs incurred by the specific research project. Funds may not be used to meet costs on any other project or activity. All costs associated with the project must be itemised and fully justified (this should be done in the 'Justification of Resources' document (see Section 3.7)).

3.5.6 Requested funds will be scrutinised during the assessment process, and if recommended for funding, NERC, on behalf of the UPGro Programme Executive Board (PEB), will request adequate evidence of the costing basis for all direct and indirect costs. Note that budgets may be reduced if considered excessive.

3.5.7 Successful projects, along with proposing excellent natural and social science that fit the objectives and scope of this call, are expected to also provide excellent value for money.

3.5.8 The UK Research Councils, which includes NERC and ESRC, are able to provide funding for UK organisations that are recognised as eligible to receive UK Research Council funding, including UK Higher Education Institutes (HEI's) and other recognised UK Research Organisations (ROs). For a list of organisations that are eligible to receive Research Council funding see http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/.

3.5.9 Organisations that are currently ineligible to receive funding directly from UK Research Councils (i.e. overseas and UK organisations not eligible for RCUK funding) may still be eligible to apply for and receive funding from UPGro, if they meet the organisation eligibility criteria in Section 5. This funding will be covered by DFID's contribution to UPGro.

3.5.10 CGIAR Research Centres[4] are eligible to apply for funding and to be involved in projects. However, under DFID funding rules they should not apply as developing country partners since they have competitive international terms and conditions and are able to recruit internationally. Full cost recovery should be based on the CG system wide guidance on costs (set out in Financial Guidance No5, and it is expected that the 2% system wide cost levy to be absorbed within all their projects). It is also expected that a clear position with regards to alignment of all research projects with the 15 CGIAR Research Programmes (the CRPs) is provided, since the Fund Council expect all CGIAR research to fall within the CRPs in due course regardless of funding modality.

3.5.11 Further information regarding the financial conditions applicable to these grants can be found in Annex 2.

3.5.12 Further Guidance on fund headings are provided in Annex 2.

3.5.13 UK Organisation Budgets

- UK organisations will receive **80% of the full economic cost (FEC)** of the project, as per standard Research Council funding rules.
- UK universities are required to calculate the FEC using the "TRAC" (Transparent Approach to Costing) methodology. Other recognised UK research organisations (ROs) use an equivalent methodology, which has been validated by the Research Councils. For more information, please go to the RCs' Dual Support Reform web pages, which include guidance notes and FAQs (http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/fecFAQ.pdf). Other organisations will be required to explain their methodology for calculating any estates and indirect costs, if they are successful.
- Overseas travel and expenses costs incurred by members of UK institutions will be paid at 80% and must be included as costs related to that UK institution (not included as costs relating to an overseas organisation).

[4] http://www.cgiar.org/cgiar-consortium/research-centers/

- All applicants should enter the Full Economic Costs of the proposed research into the budget sections of the Je-S form, as per normal Research Council applications. **All costs should be in pounds sterling (£).**

3.5.14 Non-UK Organisation Budgets

- Non-UK organisations are expected to be able to comply with full and transparent costing for budget elements.
- Non-UK organisations will be supported at **100% FEC for the direct costs** of the research.
- In addition, indirect costs (including estates costs) may be charged on staff salary and other staff-related costs (i.e. statutory contributions analogous to UK National Insurance or Superannuation contributions).
- Overheads may not be charged on non-staff related direct costs, e.g. equipment, travel and subsistence, consultancies, conferences, etc.
- The following rates for indirect costs should be applied:
  - for applicants from **developing** countries, the rate is **50%** (a list of developing countries for the purpose of this costing regime is available in Annex 1);
  - for applicants from **developed** countries, the rate is **20%**.
- For further guidance on what overhead budgets can be used for please see Annex 2.
- Non-UK organisations should **not** enter any costs in the 'Estates' section of Je-S. All overheads should be entered as an 'Other Directly Incurred cost' on Je-S.
- In order to mark costs as payable at 100%, applicants should tick the '**Exceptions'** box under the relevant category in Je-S.

3.5.15 Joint UK and non-UK applications

- **If an application involves costs from both UK and non-UK organisations**, they should be entered as separate items. For example, T&S costs for field work should be entered as two separate lines, that related to UK organisations payable at 80%, and that related to non-UK organisations, which will be payable at 100% by ticking the 'exceptions' box within the Je-S form.

3.5.16 All applicants are advised to consult their institutional finance officers when completing the financial parts of the application.

3.6 Case for Support

3.6.1 The Case for Support should include the following **three components:** Track Record, Description of Proposed Research and Data Management Plan. These components should be uploaded as a single attachment on Je-S by the lead applicant. Any joint components should upload their Track Record separately, as an "other attachment".

- The **Track Record** should be a maximum of **2 sides of A4** for **each** component application submitted. This section should include:
  - A brief outline of the organisations involved in the consortium, as named on the component application. It should include details on: the nature of the organisations named (i.e. university, research institute, NGO, etc).
  - Importantly, the Track Record should concentrate on the key named individuals/researchers, their role in the project and details of relevant experience and how they are best suited to conduct the research proposed. You may also wish to include details of any external funding held for key individuals and their organisations, and details of any relevant past collaborative work with other beneficiaries should also be given.

- o For non-UK organisations or UK organisations not normally eligible for Research Council funding (see http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/ for guidance), the Track Record should also include brief information and assurances of the organisational and fiduciary competencies of the organisation.
- o Indicate where your previous work has contributed to progressing the field of research, and/or providing impact.
- o Outline the specific expertise available for the research at the host organisation and that of any associated organisations and beneficiaries.

- The **Description of Proposed Research** should be a maximum of **16 sides of A4.** The Description of Proposed Research included in the Case for Support contains the substance of the research application. It is essential that a coherent description of the proposed project is presented, addressing the intellectual and academic case and potential for impact on the UPGro research agenda. The Description of Proposed research should address the following points:
  - o Underlying rationale, scientific, technological, social and developmental issues to be addressed. This should cover the research question and objectives and highlight the overarching policy questions/evidence challenges that will be addressed.
  - o Specific objectives, hypotheses and research questions of the project, including their potential relevance to UK and international research work in the field, relevance to UPGro and anticipated achievements and outputs, including datasets.
  - o Methodology and approach; this should include methods and location of primary data collection, and details on the use and manipulation of data.
  - o Programme and/or plan of research.
  - o Management of both project and resources, identifying the training and career development opportunities for personnel working on the project and the management structure within the project team.
  - o Any associated collaborations, partnerships or co-funding (either proposed or secured) that may be used in the project.
  - o Identification of datasets that the research will produce and which will be of potential long-term value and which the NERC data centres will need to manage and make available to enable re-use after the end of the research.

- The **Data Management Plan** should not exceed **1 side of A4** and should be submitted by the lead applicant only. This section should include a detailed description of the proposed data management structures, plans and responsibilities.

  For more information on Data Management Plans applicants should read the guidance available at http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/data/dmp/. It is expected that the relevant NERC Data Centre will be the National Geoscience Data Centre[5]. More information will be provided about Data Management at the workshop (see Section 10).

3.7 Justification of Resources

3.7.1 Justification of Resources should not exceed **2 sides A4**. This document is submitted by **each** component application on Je-S.

3.7.2 The Justification of Resources must be uploaded on Je-S as part of the application.

3.7.3 This should state the full cost of the project and explain why the requested resources are needed, including identifying why the proposal presents value for money. It should include

[5] http://www.bgs.ac.uk/services/ngdc/

justification for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, use of pool staff resources and any access to shared facilities and equipment being sought.

3.7.4 No justification of Directly Allocated Estates and Indirect Costs is required.

3.7.5 It is not sufficient merely to list what is being requested. Where you do not provide sufficient justification for any item, it may be cut from any award made.

3.7.6 In short, you must demonstrate why you are requesting the funds you are, and how they will be used to deliver the cutting edge research with impact that you are proposing.

3.7.7 Please note that if successful, the amount awarded to a project is limited to the amount requested at the time of application, and the final award amount agreed by the funders. This will not be increased at any time due to changes in the global financial markets. Therefore applicants should set out how they will deal with any changing currency fluctuations that may occur during the duration of their project and the possible impact this may have on the plan of work.

3.7.8 An example of a well-written Justification of Resources can be found on the NERC website at http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/howtoapply/justification_eg.pdf. Guidance on what should be included is also available in the Je-S helptext at http://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Handbook/index.htm.

3.7.9 For all items of equipment costing between £10,000 (including VAT) and the OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) threshold, but excluding that to be used for instrument development, the Research Organisation will need to provide evidence of an evaluation of the use of existing relevant capital assets. The Justification of Resources should be used to:

- Confirm that the piece of equipment is not readily available for use within the host institution, or any other assessable location (for instance by making reference to any asset registers consulted);
- Provide evidence that all other reasonable options have been considered;
- Explain, if the equipment requested will replace existing equipment, what will happen to the existing equipment;
- Set out what contribution the Research Organisation will be making towards the cost of the equipment. **Contributions of the order of 50% from the Research Organisation will be expected.**

3.7.10 For requests for all single items of equipment costing more than the OJEU threshold (excluding that to be used for instrument development) Research Organisations must complete a business case outlining why NERC should invest in this item of equipment. Further guidance on the detail required in the business case and the rules pertaining to application for items of equipment can be found on the RCUK website at: http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/rcuk-prod/assets/documents/publications/Equipment_Guidance.pdf. The business case will be subject to peer review and separate consideration for funding. The business case should be no more than 2 sides A4 and is additional to the Justification of Resources and the Case for Support. There may be duplication between the Case for Support and the business case but it is important that the business case is a standalone document and contains sufficient information to allow separate peer review assessment. A separate justification must be provided for every capital item of equipment over the OJEU threshold. These should be submitted by the lead Research Organisation in any joint applications. All applicants intending to include a business case for equipment in a research grant application must contact NERC to discuss the request well in advance of any proposal submission.

3.7.11 RCUK and DFID have recently adopted new policies on open access publication. It is now required that all publications be open access. UPGro expects that all academic journal publications be open access (gold or green), and where possible this should include books and book chapters. http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/RCUKOpenAccessPolicy.pdf, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfid-research-open-and-enhanced-access-policy

3.7.12 Costs associated with open access should be considered a legitimate research expense and included in the overall research budget as long as:

- The costs are proportionate, reasonable and represent value for money. The funders would expect that most costs are likely to be Article Processing Charges ('APCs', 'author fees' or 'publication fees'). The price of an APC varies widely, but the Government Finch Report[6] suggested a current average APC price of £1450+VAT.
- Existing arrangements and resources at the host institution are used first when available and appropriate. **UK institutions covered by the block grant from RCUK for open access costs cannot claim the costs**, but other UK organisations can. Where open access is sought for publications from multiple organisations, some which receive the RCUK block grant and some which do not, it is the responsibility of the organisation of the first author to lead on any costs.

3.8 Pathways to Impact

3.8.1 The Pathways to Impact attachment should not exceed **2 sides of A4.**

3.8.2 All applicants are required to include a 'Pathways to Impact' attachment as part of their research proposal that describes how the proposed work will achieve impact and build capacity.

3.8.3 In addition the Pathways to Impact section should address the following:

- **Who** are the intended beneficiaries of the research? These should include at least a description of the intended ultimate beneficiaries of poor people in Low Income Countries as well as the intermediate direct users of research.
- **Who** will use UPGro's research and new knowledge? Identifying and, wherever possible, involving these people at an early stage of the design and implementation of the research is essential for impact of the research. During later stages of projects it may be appropriate to also consider other groups who may act to help implement and put research into use.
- **How** will UPGro's new knowledge be used? Determining, early in the process, how the different stakeholders are likely to use the research is important. Working with direct users of research and other beneficiaries ensures that research results can be presented in ways and formats that are tailored to meet their needs.

3.8.4 It is important the applicants also consider tracking of their impacts and outcomes with the appropriate metrics as part of the Pathways to Impact plan. This will feed into the programme reporting and is not optional. Without contribution to this reporting there is a risk that the funding source to the programme will be cut. More information will be available at the workshop (see Section 10).

3.8.5 It is recommended that 10% of the overall budget should be dedicated to delivering the activities outlined in the Pathways to Impact attachment and for participating in the events organised by the Knowledge Broker Team, including the tracking of impacts and outcomes and attendance at relevant international conferences. There are no additional funds for this work and all costs, including staff time, associated must be built into the overall cost for the programme of work. There will also be the expectation that projects contribute to the UPGro website (http://upgro.org/). Applicants should be aware that they may need to remain flexible for this element of activity and they should build in contingency in their funds.

3.8.6 In addition to the Pathways to Impact activities developed by individual projects, it should also be noted that UPGro may wish to sponsor additional outreach activities involving one

[6] http://www.researchinfonet.org/publish/finch/

or more projects in order to increase the impact of their research outcomes. All grant holders will be expected to cooperate with the Programme Executive Board (PEB) in contributing to the wider UPGro programme of knowledge sharing, uptake and communication activities, and will also be expected to represent the scheme and their project through involvement, where appropriate, in third-party events.

3.9 Letters of Support

3.9.1 Each Project Partner must provide a detailed signed letter of support of up to 2 sides of A4.

3.9.2 The letter of support should confirm the organisation's commitment to the proposed project, identify the value, relevance and possible benefits of the proposed work to the partner, the period of support, the full nature of the collaboration and how the partner will be involved in the project and provide added value.

3.9.3 Partner contributions, whether in cash or in kind, should be explained in detail in the case for support, including the equivalent value of any in-kind contributions.

3.9.4 The letter should be written when the proposal is being prepared and targeted specifically to the project.

4 Je-S Registration

4.1 Registering an Organisation on Je-S

4.1.1 If your organisation is already registered on the Je-S system, you do not need to re-register. However, if this is your first application for funding, you should follow the steps in Annex 3 to ensure that your organisation is registered on Je-S.

4.2 Registering as an Individual on Je-S

4.2.1 All individuals that will be named on an application (with the exception of Project Partners and subcontractors) must create an individual Je-S account for themselves in order to be added to an application. See online Je-S help text guidance on how to register on Je-S. It is necessary for an individual's organisation to have been registered before they can register themselves.

4.2.2 If you have registered as an individual with Je-S through a previous call, you will not need to do so again.

5 Organisation Eligibility

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 To apply for the UPGro 2014 Consortium Grants Full Proposals, Research Organisations must have registered as users of the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission system (full details of the system are available at: https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/Jes2WebLoginSite/login.aspx) and have had their costing methodology validated.

5.1.2 Most UK Higher Education Institutions and some other Independent UK Research Organisations are already eligible to apply for, and hold, UK Research Council grants. Details on which UK organisations are currently eligible for Research Council funding can be found at http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/.

5.1.3 UPGro will fund non-UK and other UK organisations where these are found to be eligible.

5.1.4 Non-UK organisations (and other UK organisations not currently eligible[7] to receive Research Council funding) that are interested in applying will only be eligible to directly receive UPGro funding (i.e. be named as PI) if they satisfy all of the following conditions:

(1) The organisation must be a legal entity.

(2) The organisation must be able to demonstrate an independent in-house capability to undertake and lead research and training in the field or discipline in which it wishes to be funded. This would normally involve employment of at least three permanent or long term staff, each of whom have 4-6 years postdoctoral research experience or equivalent[8] and recognised research publications at national and at international level; they must also be capable of leading innovative research projects, directing post-doctoral researchers, and providing necessary supervision at this level. Note that it is not essential to have post-doctoral experience, equivalent research experience, such as demonstrated long term professional and specialist experience will also be recognised.

(3) The organisation must meet the accountability and audit requirements of the UPGro funders. This requires your organisation to provide, on request, full documentation to give assurance of the:

- Institutional governance and accountability structures;
- Audit and accountability procedures;
- Sources of core funding and other funding.

(4) CGIAR Research Centres are eligible to apply, but must follow the funding conditions set out in Section 3.5.10.

5.1.5 **Organisations that do not meet these requirements may not act as the lead organisation** (i.e. as a PI) and will not directly receive funds from the awarding body. However, they may be named as a Co-I, Project Partner or sub-contractor organisation (and receive funds through the lead organisation) — that is, they can serve as one of the UPGro Grant institutions, but not be the lead institution on an application (including any component applications).

5.1.6 If the proposal is successful and offered UPGro funding, the lead organisation (i.e. the organisation of the PI) on any grant application, will be required to undergo eligibility checks before any funding will be confirmed. This process will not apply to organisations that are

[7] Research Organisations currently ineligible to receive funding from the UK Research Councils (RC) may be eligible under this call for proposals. Note that funding for these organisations will come from DFID and not the Research Councils. These organisations will not be eligible for any other RC funding, unless specifically stated by an individual Council.

[8] Equivalent experience which may take a number of forms, such as good track record of long term in depth professional experience in a relevant field of work. Any case for equivalent experience must be fully explained and justified in the track record section part of the application and the submitted CV.

already recognised to receive UK Research Council funding (principally UK HEIs and eligible ROs). See http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/.

5.1.7 Any organisation that is not recognised to receive UK Research Council funding, but that has received UPGro funding from previous grants, may still be required to undergo these checks before funding is confirmed.

6 Research Roles and Eligibility

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 Applicants must ensure that they accurately define their roles within the grant so that there is no later confusion.

6.1.2 With the exception of project partners and 'staff' such as researchers and technicians, individuals may be named on a **maximum of two** UPGro Grants submitted, and may be named as a **lead Principal Investigator (PI) on only one**. The total time commitment across the applications with which they are involved should not exceed 100%. If individuals are named on more than two submitted proposals then they will be asked to retract their involvement from the additional proposals, which may be to the detriment of both the individual and projects concerned.

6.2 Role Descriptions and Eligibility

6.2.1 Principal Investigators (PI)

- Each application submitted as part of the UPGro proposal will have a named PI. If you are submitting a joint proposal, then the PI named on the lead application will act as the lead Principal Investigator for the project as a whole. The PI on the lead application will direct the research and the management of the project; for example, the lead PI is responsible for overall project reporting requirements.
- PIs and their respective organisations will be responsible for ensuring that the terms and conditions for their grant are met.
- Principal Investigators may be from any type of organisation that meets the eligibility criteria. UK Principal Investigators from Research Council eligible organisations are required to meet the standard NERC eligibility criteria stated in the NERC Grants Handbook http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/howtoapply/forms/grantshandbook.pdf.
- Non-UK Principal Investigators and PIs from organisations not normally eligible for UK Research Council Funding, should meet the following criteria:
    - have at least three years of relevant post-doctoral experience, or an appropriate equivalent level of research experience[9];
    - be employed, at the time of application, by the Research Organisation submitting the proposal, or if not employed (i) have an existing formal arrangement with the organisation that enables him or her to carry out research there and receive all necessary management and infrastructure support from the organisation or (ii) be scheduled to move to the submitting organisation before the proposed start date of the grant in such a way that would ensure that the criterion stated above is met by the time the grant starts;
    - have an assurance from the submitting organisation, at the time of application, that should the proposal be successful, the contract of employment, or formal commitment, to provide support if not employed, will extend at least three months beyond the end date of the grant.

6.2.2 Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI)

- A Co-PI will be the lead investigator on a component application.
- The budget applied for on each component will be paid directly to the organisation of the PI or Co-PI.
- The eligibility requirements for a Co-PI are the same as those for a PI.

[9] Equivalent experience may take a number of forms, such as a good track record of long term in depth professional experience in a relevant field of work. Any case for equivalent experience must be fully explained and justified in the track record section part of the application and the submitted CV.

- Co-PIs on component parts of joint applications will work with the PI on the lead application to deliver the research, management and leadership of the project.

6.2.3 Co-Investigator (Co-I)

- A Co-Investigator assists the PI in the research, management and/or leadership of the project. They may be expected to take over the leadership of their part of the project if the PI is unable to continue in their role, except where their organisation is ineligible to directly receive funds from the awarding body (i.e. it does not meet the organisation eligibility criteria in Section 5).
- Co-Investigators from an organisation that is not the same as the PI's organisation will receive any requested funds through the PI's organisation and not directly from the awarding body (NERC on behalf of UPGro funding partners).
- Co-Investigators may be from any organisation, including those that do not meet the eligibility criteria to directly receive funds from the awarding body because their organisation will not be receiving money directly. UK based Co-Investigators from Research Council eligible organisations are required to meet the standard NERC eligibility criteria stated in the NERC Grants Handbook http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/howtoapply/forms/grantshandbook.pdf.
- Non-UK based Co-Investigators and Co-Is from organisations not normally eligible for UK Research Council Funding should meet the following criteria:
    - have at least three years of relevant post-doctoral experience, or an appropriate equivalent level of research experience[10];
    - be employed, at the time of application, by the Research Organisation submitting the proposal, or if not employed (i) have an existing formal arrangement with the organisation that enables him or her to carry out research there and receive all necessary management and infrastructure support from the organisation or (ii) be scheduled to move to the submitting organisation before the proposed start date of the grant in such a way that would ensure that the criterion stated above is met by the time the grant starts;
    - have an assurance from the submitting organisation, at the time of application, that, if the proposal is successful, the contract of employment, or formal commitment, to provide support if not employed, will extend at least three months beyond the end date of the grant.

6.2.4 Researcher Co-I

- A Researcher Co-I is a specifically named post-doctoral research assistant (PDRA), or other suitably experienced staff member, who has at least two years of relevant post-doctoral experience, or an appropriate equivalent level of research experience, but who is not eligible to be a PI or Co-I.
- They will have made substantial contribution to the formulation and development of the project and will be closely involved in the project (if funded).
- Researcher Co-I's from an organisation that is not the same as the lead organisation will receive any requested funds through the lead organisation and not directly from the awarding body (NERC on behalf of UPGro funding partners).
- Researcher Co-I's may be from any organisation, including those that do not meet the eligibility criteria to directly receive funds from the awarding body (see Section 5.).
- A Researcher Co-I will be employed for the duration of their contract by the same Research Organisation as either the PI or one of the Co-Is (but not necessarily at the

[10] Equivalent experience may take a number of forms, such as a good track record of long term in depth professional experience in a relevant field of work. Any case for equivalent experience must be fully explained and justified in the track record section part of the application and the submitted CV.

time of application). This contract may be shorter than the length of the grant award, depending on the requirements of the post, and they do not have to be employed by that Research Organisation at the time of application.

- Researcher Co-Is may not take over from the Principal Investigator, should the PI leave the project.

6.2.5 Researchers

- A researcher is an individual who will work as a research assistant on the project, but who is not eligible to be a PI, Co-I or Researcher Co-I.
- The researcher must be from the same organisation as the PI, or one of the Co-Is.
- The researcher should have a suitable level of experience in order to fulfil the requirements of the project. This may include having a PhD, or having several years' relevant research or policy experience, as appropriate to the role.
- There is no limit to the number of applications a Researcher can be named on, but if successful on more than one grant awarded, an alternative researcher would need to be found if time committed exceeded 100% FTE.
- A Researcher may be a specifically named individual (in which case they would need to register with Je-S) or be included using a post identifier[11], where the candidate will be recruited later.

6.2.6 Project partners

- Project Partners may be experts who provide invaluable inputs and advice to the project, and will have an integral role in the proposed research.
- An organisation should only be named as a Project Partner if it is providing ***specific unpaid contributions***, either direct or indirect, to the project (e.g. time, equipment, etc).
- Minor costs may be requested to facilitate collaboration, but these should be substantially less than the contribution of the Project Partner organisation to the project. These costs will not come directly from the awarding body (NERC on behalf of UPGro funding partners) but will be distributed by the lead organisation on the proposal.
- There is no limit to the number of Project Partners you can have on the application, but Project Partners must be from separate Research Organisations to those submitting the proposal.

6.2.7 Sub-contractors

- Sub-contractors contribute a specific service to the project, but may not necessarily be involved in the development and design of the project.
- They are not named specifically on the application pro-forma on Je-S, but should be identified in the case for support, along with a description of their input to the project.
- The costs for sub-contractors should be included in the application, under 'Directly Incurred Other' and will be distributed by the lead organisation on that application, i.e. (NERC on behalf of UPGro funding partners) does not pay these costs directly to the subcontractor.
- The lead organisation will be responsible for drawing up any agreements regarding funding and work plans with any named sub-contractors.

[11] For example 'Researcher1'.

6.2.8 Visiting Researchers

- Visiting Researchers may be funded to visit the investigator's institution for up to 12 months, in order to give full time advice and assistance on the research.

6.2.9 Project studentships (either undergraduate, Masters or PhD studentships) **cannot** be included on UPGro Consortium Grants.

7 Submitting your Proposal

7.1.1 Applications must be completed in full before final submission. The Je-S system has a validation procedure which will identify sections that have not been completed. An exception to this is for any 'Other Attachments', so **applicants must ensure for themselves** that any such documents have been included.

7.1.2 Changes to the Je-S registration process mean that for certain schemes, such as UPGro, any organisations that are not currently Je-S registered, may self-register their organisation (see Annex 3). For these self-registering organisations there is no need to establish a submitter pool. Therefore these applicants can submit the application directly to the Council (NERC).

7.1.3 However, please note that for organisations that are already Je-S registered, your application will be routed through your existing submitter route. Therefore when a researcher submits his or her application, a message will be sent to their host organisation's designated 'submitter', who must then complete the submission process to the Council.

7.1.4 Therefore, there is a further layer of administration between the researcher submitting the application and it being received by the NERC, via Je-S. This layer of administration is at the applicant's host institution, and the NERC cannot accept responsibility for any delays which may occur as a consequence. The process can be shown as:

Applicant → Submitter (within the applicant's institution) → NERC.

7.1.5 Note: each component application comprising a joint proposal will need to go through the same submission process. The PI on the lead application should ensure that all joint application components have submitted their part of the joint proposal.

If all applications are not FULLY submitted by the deadline, i.e. all component parts from all PI/CoPIs, they will not be accepted.

The deadline for all research applications to this call is **16:00 hours UK local time (BST/GMT+1/UTC+1) 19th June 2014**.

7.1.6 Applications can only be accepted by electronic submission in the manner indicated on the form and accompanying guidance notes, and it must be clear and unambiguous that **full** submission took place prior to the deadline.

7.1.7 Electronic acknowledgements will be sent to the lead PI and submitting organisation from the Je-S system.

7.1.8 Applicants must ensure they know whether their application will be routed through a submitter pool. We strongly advise that you check with Je-S whether or not you need your host institution to submit your completed application on your behalf. You can check this in Je-S by opening your Je-S application and selecting 'Document Actions' at the top and then 'Show submission Path'.

7.1.9 We strongly advise applicants whose applications will be routed through a submitter pool to secure confirmation from their relevant administrator that the application has been submitted successfully to NERC.

8 Summary of Requirements

8.1 Summary of Requirements for the UPGro Consortium Grants Call

8.1.1 Important requirements which applicants should note:

- The maximum budget is £1.9M FEC per consortium for up to four years, with a latest start date of 31 Jan 2015.
- Applications must be in English and submitted through Je-S by 19th June 2014 16:00 (4pm) UK Local Time (BST/GMT+1/UTC+1).
- Proposals must cut across at least two of the three UPGro themes and include both natural and social or economic sciences research
- The primary focus of the research is in Low Income Countries in SSA but research may be undertaken in Middle Income Countries (MIC) in SSA where there is a clear impact of the research on the poor and applicability to low-income countries.
- Proposals will need to describe both what their projects will do to ensure that poor people living in sub-Saharan Africa will benefit from their research and how the research will support the development of research capacity in SSA.
- It is a requirement for the current call that linkages with SSA institutions are established. This should include both research institutions and the organisations where the intended users of the outcomes of the research, such as decision- and policy-makers, are based. There should be a strong and clear role for developing country partners in the projects.
- It is recommended that 10% of the overall budget should be dedicated to delivering the activities outlined in the Pathways to Impact attachment and for participating in the events organised by the Knowledge Broker Team, including the tracking of impacts and outcomes.
- All publications resulting from UPGro funded research should be open access and where applicable applicants should include the costs associated with open access in the proposals.

8.2 Summary of Requirements for Single Applications

Document Type	**Required**	**As necessary**	**Number limit**
Title of proposal (pro-forma)*	✓		150 characters
Type of proposal (pro-forma)*	✓		n/a
Objectives (pro-forma)*	✓		4000 characters
Summary (pro-forma)*	✓		4000 characters
Academic Beneficiaries (pro-forma)*	✓		4000 characters
Impact Summary (pro-forma)*	✓		4000 characters
Nominated referees (pro-forma)*		✓	Max 4
Project Partners (pro-forma)*		✓	No limit

Previous Track Record for each component (Part 1 of the Case for Support)^	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Description of Proposed Research (Part 2 of the Case for Support)^	✓		Max 16 sides A4
Data Management Plan (Part 3 of the Case for Support)^	✓		Max 1 sides A4
Justification of Resources^	✓		Max 2 sides A4 each application
Pathways to Impact^	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Letters of support from Project Partners^		✓	Max 2 sides A4
CVs for named research staff and Visiting Researchers from all component Research Organisations^	✓		Max 2 sides A4 each
CVs for all Principal and Co-I Investigators from all component Research Organisations^	✓		Max 2 sides A4 each
Equipment Quotations^		✓	n/a

*To be completed online
^To be completed offline and uploaded as an attachment

8.3 Summary of Requirements for Joint Applications

Document Type	**Common to all proposals**	**Submitted by Lead Only**	**Submitted by Individual components**	**Number limit**
Title of proposal (pro-forma)*	✓		✓	150 characters
Type of proposal (pro-forma)*	✓		✓	n/a
Objectives (pro-forma)*	✓		✓	4000 characters
Summary (pro-forma)*	✓		✓	4000 characters
Academic Beneficiaries (pro-forma)*	✓		✓	4000 characters
Impact Summary (pro-forma)*	✓		✓	4000 characters
Nominated referees (pro-forma)*		✓		Max 4
Project Partners (pro-forma)*	✓	✓		No limit
Previous Track Record for each component (Part 1 of the Case for Support, use 'other attachment' for any non-lead applications)^			✓	Max 2 sides A4
Description of Proposed Research (Part 2 of the Case for Support)^	✓	✓		Max 16 sides A4
Data Management Plan (Part 3 of the Case for Support)^	✓	✓		Max 1 sides A4
Justification of Resources^			✓	Max 2 sides A4 each application

Pathways to Impact^	✓	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Letters of support from Project Partners^	✓	✓		Max 2 sides A4
CVs for named research staff and Visiting Researchers from all component Research Organisations^	✓		✓	Max 2 sides A4
CVs for all Principal and Co-I Investigators from all component Research Organisations^			✓	Max 2 sides A4 each
Equipment Quotations^			✓	n/a

*To be completed online
^To be completed offline and uploaded as an attachment

9 Assessment Process

9.1.1 The full proposals will be sent out for external peer review. The Secretariat will seek between 3 and 6 reviews for each application.

9.1.2 Applicants will have the opportunity to respond to the reviewer comments. **All reviews received by 14 Aug 2014 will be sent to the lead PI for comment. This must be completed by 8 Sep 2014.** If you do not expect to be available during this period, please contact the UPGro Secretariat (upgro@nerc.ac.uk) to notify them of a suitable alternative contact. Reviews received after this date will be sent for comment as soon as they are received.

9.1.3 The Proposals, reviews and responses will be considered by an independent panel of experts. **The panel will interview the applicants, applicants will be given the opportunity to present their projects to the panel and this will be followed by a short question and answer session. The interviews will take place in the week commencing 20 Oct 2014 and each team can have a maximum of two representatives at the interview.**

9.1.4 The panel will take the following criteria into account:

- Research Excellence – incorporates but is not confined to:
    - assessment of the problem to be addressed and how novel/exciting/ambitious it is;
    - approach for addressing problem and identification and mitigation of risk;
    - use of innovative, multidisciplinary approaches;
    - involvement of developing country partners;
    - suitable expertise to achieve the aims and objectives;
- Fit to Call – incorporates:
    - potential for significant and sustainable development impact;
    - alignment of the proposed research with the programme's research themes (see Section 1.4);
    - identification of pathways to development impact;
    - stakeholder engagement and approach to the wider development agenda;
    - breadth and depth of consortium partners and in country teams;
    - value for money.

9.1.5 The moderating panel will take into account all of the review information and will award a final grade for both of the criteria outlined above using a 0-10 scale for Research Excellence and a 0-6 scale for Fit to Call. Proposals will be ranked according to these scores, with Research Excellence and Fit to Call scores carrying equal weighting.

9.1.6 Pathways to Impact are no longer scored by reviewers and are no longer used as a secondary criterion for ranking proposals. Reviewers will provide comments on Pathways to Impact and the panel will discuss these comments and deem them acceptable/unacceptable. **An acceptable Pathways to Impact plan is a condition of funding.** Grants will not be allowed to start unless unacceptable Pathways to Impact plans are enhanced to an acceptable level within 2 months of notification of the panel outcome. See http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/howtoapply/pathwaystoimpact/ for more information.

9.1.7 The UPGro PEB will take the recommendations of the panel into account along with the UPGro portfolio and the available budget in making their final decision. The decision of the PEB will be final.

9.1.8 Applicants will be given full feedback from the panel outlining the reasons that they were successful/unsuccessful upon request. No further feedback will be available.

10 Workshop for Applicants

10.1.1 Applicants invited to submit a Full Proposal are required to attend a workshop to be held on **13th May 2014** at the Cumberland Hotel in London. The meeting will start at 10.00am and is expected to finish no later than 4.00pm.

The aim of the workshop is to provide further details on the requirements and expectations of the UPGro programme; to provide an opportunity for those proceeding to the Full Proposal stage to raise any questions with the funder; and to meet the programme's Knowledge Broker. Further details will be circulated in due course.

At least one representative and a maximum of three from each Proposal will be expected to attend. Travel costs will be reimbursed by the programme for researchers from developing countries.

11 Call Timeline and Summary of Requirements

11.1.1 The table below summarises the timeline, the application requirements, and assessment procedures that will be employed at each stage.

Date	Stage	Applicant responsibilities
Mar 2014	Successful Outline Proposal applicants invited to submit Full Proposal	Applicants to prepare Full Proposals
13 May 2014	Workshop for successful Outline Proposal applicants	Attendance of workshop
19 Jun 2014	Deadline for submission of Full Proposals	Applicants to submit proposals via the Joint electronic Submissions (Je-S) System
14 Aug 2014	PI invited to respond to reviews	PI to respond to reviewers
8 Sep 2014	Deadline for PI response	PI to respond to reviewers
WC 20 Oct 2014	Moderating panel and interviews	Two of project members to attend interview
Nov 2014	Consortium Grants awarded	
31 Jan 2015	Consortium Grants started	Applicants must have returned starting certificates

NB: Please note that these dates may be subject to change.