

2019 UK-China-BRI Countries Education Partnership Initiative Call Guidelines (for UK applicants)

Call opens: 11 October 2019
Call closes: 10 November 2019

I. Introduction

Building on the success of the UK-China-BRI Countries¹ Education Partnership Initiative (hereinafter referred to as “the Initiative”) in 2018, this year the British Council and Ministry of Education China will continue to jointly co-fund **multi-lateral higher education links** between the UK, China and BRI countries, with priority focus on **ASEAN**² and **Central and Eastern European countries**³.

Seed-funding by the British Council will be provided to institutions from the UK to partner with China, and BRI countries for projects that will boost higher education exchanges, create opportunities for individuals (students, academics, researchers), and deliver real benefit to the education sectors of the countries involved.

Funding will be focussed on higher education projects that aim to:

1. **enhance graduate employability**
2. **foster entrepreneurialism and creativity**
3. **support the internationalisation of higher education.**

Examples of areas that projects may focus on:

- joint curriculum development
- creating an enabling environment for transnational education collaborations (e.g. regulatory and policy environment, quality assurance, student experience, academic development, teaching quality and learning etc)
- student exchange projects
- leadership training and professional development (e.g. for academics and senior administrators)

II. Strategic Objectives

The key objectives of the Initiative are to boost:

- a) student mobility
- b) academic exchanges
- c) leadership skills development
- d) teaching excellence
- e) research collaborations

III. Priority Area

The Initiative will prioritize on projects in the subject area of **Advanced Manufacturing**.

¹ For BRI countries, please check below link for the full list and profiles:

https://eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/info/iList.jsp?cat_id=10076

² ASEAN countries included 10 States — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

³ Central and Eastern European countries included 16 states – Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Estonia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Republic of Lithuania, Latvia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania, Republic of Montenegro

As the world embraces the Industry 4.0 revolution, manufacturing is becoming the key component of the economic development of many countries. The UK Government's recently announced Industrial Strategy has a strong focus on the advanced manufacturing sector, with manufacturing comprising 10 per cent of the UK economy and providing 46 per cent of the UK's exports.

The UK is not alone in placing increased emphasis on the importance of advanced manufacturing, China has recently released industrial policies and initiatives to take a leading role in the manufacturing revolution. The Made in China 2025 initiative is the latest state-led programme seeking to transform China into a leading manufacturing power. An Advanced Manufacturing Industry Investment Fund ((£2.3 billion) was also released under the initiative to cover all industries in MIC 2025.

Industry 4.0 will also have significant impact on ASEAN given that manufacturing accounts for more than 35% of ASEAN's GDP. ASEAN member states have also put in efforts at national level to improve the manufacturing sector with a series of policies, such as "the Industry4ward Policy" by Malaysia and the "Making Indonesia 4.0".

With the Horizon 2020 R&D funding programme allocating an approximate €17 billion budget for the "Industry Leadership" category under the background of Industrial 4.0, the manufacturing sector will see a lot of activities in the area of advanced manufacturing and technologies. The Central and Eastern European countries would be expected to become a major hub for manufacturing innovation due to the availability of grants and tax incentives and the accessibility of skilled researchers.

In this context the Initiative will be supporting projects areas including, but not limited to:

- Manufacturing technologies
- Engineering design
- Robotics
- Materials engineering
- Process systems

IV. Funding Amount

The British Council has earmarked GBP210,000 to kick start this project in 2019/2020. For each project, funding of £60,000-£70,000 will be awarded covering the whole project duration. Projects in receipt of funding will be expected to start in April 2020 and can run for a maximum of five years (until March 2025). The funding is for the duration of the project **and not** per annum.

Ministry of Education China will provide funding to Chinese partner institutions of each project, following their financial regulations.

V. Assessment Criteria

Projects must lead to at least one of the following outcomes:

- *Increase collaboration among institutions in the UK, China and BRI countries by nurturing strategic and sustainable partnerships. (Examples: training hubs, joint curriculum design, joint centres for the development and research of priority subject areas, etc.)*
- *Increase opportunities for students, academics and early career researchers from the UK, China and BRI countries to engage with each other and gain international skills and experience. (Examples: collaborative student projects, academic exchange projects to boost teaching and learning experience, early career researchers' workshops and discussions leading to specific research ideas and additional funding)*

Projects must be able to demonstrate all of the following impacts:

- *Creation of measurable and tangible impacts in the short term (within 1 year), in the medium term (1 - 3 years), and in the long term (3 years and beyond);*
- *Creation of real value to the UK, China and BRI countries with evidence-based results, such as economic returns, increased numbers of international students, enhanced employability, greater international influence, etc.*
- *Creation of benefits that apply to the wider higher education sector, such as by sharing international best practice.*

Priority considerations will therefore be given to projects that demonstrate:

- *significant growth potential for the UK, China and BRI countries, such as skills development and job creations*
- *access to other sources of funding, including in-kind contributions that support the delivery of project outputs, such as fixed assets and staff, industry support;*
- *innovative services and/or products;*
- *sustainability beyond the project period*

VI. Operational Requirements

Proposals must meet the following operational requirements:

Value for money:

Projects must achieve the best possible outcomes with the funding and resources available, while ensuring funding and resources are used effectively, economically and without waste.

Deliverability:

Proposals must incorporate a credible delivery plan with realistic milestones for progressing the different elements of the project to completion on time and within budget. This will require a team with relevant skills and experience.

Affordability and sustainability:

Project proposals must be affordable in relation to the overall funding available and be financially sustainable with benefits that can endure beyond the funding period.

Partnership:

All project proposals **must include** minimum of at least 1 UK institution, 1 Chinese institution and 1 institution from BRI Countries. In addition, project proposal must have signed off from the most senior leader of each of the partner institutions. (ie.: Vice Chancellor, College Principals, President)

Monitoring and evaluation plan:

Projects must have a clear monitoring and evaluation plan. The plan should explain what the key performance indicators are and how monitoring will be carried out. Tangible milestones should be set, with an explanation as to how they will be measured. A risk management plan should also be included.

VII. Assessment Process

Project proposals will be assessed based on the information provided in the application form. Shortlisted applicants may be contacted for further information about their proposals. A final decision will be made by the Project Board, which will consist of representatives from the British Council, China Ministry of Education, and Education institutions and organizations in the UK and China.

Proposals will be assessed as follows:

- Alignment *with* strategic objectives (30 per cent)
 - *Proposals must show a clear understanding of and fully address the strategic objectives.*

- *Proposals must demonstrate the ability to generate outcomes that are of benefit to the wider public.*
- *Proposals must explain clearly what kind of opportunities they will create for individuals in the UK, China, and BRI countries, and how this will be achieved.*
- Potential to deliver target outcomes and impacts (40 per cent)
 - *Proposals must clearly explain what the project will achieve and how this will contribute to creating opportunities for individuals and/or increasing collaboration between the UK, China and BRI countries.*
 - *Proposals must propose a realistic action plan to achieve the target outcomes, with defined impacts that can be monitored and evaluated.*
 - *Proposals must demonstrate measurable, tangible and sustainable impacts that bring value and benefits to the UK, China and BRI countries as well as the education sector. Projects that principally benefit one institution will not be considered.*
 - *Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate significant growth potential for the UK, China and BRI countries, innovative services and/or products, access to other sources of funding, and partnerships with Chinese & BRI organisations.*
- Capacity to deliver on time and within budget (30 per cent)
 - *Projects must be led by a team with the skills and experience necessary to successfully deliver the proposed work.*
 - *Proposals must have a clear budget plan that can be realistically executed.*
 - *Proposals must fully address the operational requirements.*

After the results are announced, the British Council will sign agreements with the successful applicants. Funding will be administered after the agreements are signed and all funded applicants must submit a declaration confirming they have received the funds.

VIII. Who can apply from the UK?

The UK-China-BRI Countries Education Partnership Initiative is open to all UK organisations and institutions involved in international education, including:

- education authorities, research organisations, and awarding bodies
- universities, colleges, and schools

IX. How to apply?

Please complete the attached application form and email it along with all supporting documentation to partnershipfund@britishcouncil.org.cn by 23:59 GMT on 10 November 2019.

Any enquiries about the British Council UK-China-BRI Countries Education Partnership Initiative or the bidding process can also be sent to the above email address.

X. Timetable:

Call for proposals:	11 October 2019
Deadline for proposals:	10 November 2019
Announcement of results:	18 December 2019
Projects start:	April 2020

XI. Implementation

All funded projects must be implemented in accordance with the approved proposals, any additional conditions stipulated by the Project Board, and the agreement signed with the British Council. Any changes to the proposed activities must be approved by the Project Board before going ahead. More detailed terms and conditions will be stipulated in each project agreement.

XII. Monitoring & Evaluation

Funded projects will be expected to provide quarterly progress updates and annual achievement reports based on the milestones agreed at the time of approval. A project manager from the British Council will monitor all projects. The British Council will also commission independent evaluations of selected projects that are of strategic importance to the British Council UK-China-BRI countries Education Partnership Initiative.

A detailed record of activities, including important communications, documents and spending, should be kept in case an external audit is carried out.