

Clarification questions and responses - International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF)

International Research Grant Proposal Writing Workshop for researchers from Thailand, Cambodia, and Lao PDR

Date: 23 January 2026

(Version 2.0) as of 26 January 2026

Change(s)	Page in original version	Page in version 2.0
Revised Question Number	All	All
Clarified response for Question 1	1	1
Clarified response for Question 2	1	1

1. Who can submit a proposal: individuals or organisations? How many trainers will be appointed, and how will they work together?

The proposal can be submitted either by an organisation or by an individual with a team of four trainers, to enable four training sessions to run simultaneously. Proposal from individuals or organisations with less than four trainers included will not be accepted.

2. Will the selected Supplier be permitted to use existing British Council owned materials from other programmes and projects (such as Researcher Connect) in the design and delivery of this Project?

Researcher Connect Online (RCO) materials, and similar pre-existing intellectual property owned by the British Council are only licenced to others in limited circumstances on a case-by-case basis and subject to terms and conditions of use. The British Council does not anticipate that RCO materials will be useful for this Project.

3. Will the British Council review the curriculum and materials before delivery?

Yes, there will be an opportunity for the British Council to review the curriculum and training materials in advance. Further details on the review timeline will be shared later.

4. Will each trainer be responsible for one group?

Yes. Each trainer will facilitate one group, with the same core content delivered across all four groups once materials have been finalised.

5. What is the budget for this procurement?

The maximum available budget (ceiling) is £33,700.

This should cover:

- Professional fees
- Travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs

The stated budget does not include VAT or other applicable taxes.

6. Can staff or project management costs be included?

Yes. Suppliers should submit a full and complete project cost. If any costs are not explicitly listed in the tender documents, they should be clearly identified and justified in the proposal.

7. Who will arrange the venue and logistics?

The British Council will coordinate the venue and overall training logistics.

8. What are the criteria for assessing the commercial proposal?

The commercial score is based on the Overall Price, calculated in line with Annex 3 (Pricing Approach) and as set out in the RFP.

9. What should we do if we cannot register on the procurement portal?

If you are unable to register your organisation on the portal, please contact

Moiz.khalid@britishcouncil.org.pk

10. Who are the expected participants?

Total participants: 120 researchers

- 100 from Thailand (Cluster 1–2 universities as set out in clause 7 of the RFP)
- 20 from Cambodia and Lao PDR

Target profile:

- Leading or established researchers
- With prior experience applying for UK or international research funding
- The participants will be selected by the ministries and government agencies

11. Are four trainers a preference or a requirement?

Four trainers are compulsory, based on the cohort size (120 participants), with approximately 30 participants per trainer.

12. Will the session on 11 March be online or in person?

The session will be hybrid:

- Trainers are expected to attend in person
- Some guest speakers may join virtually

13. Which VAT rate should be applied (UK or Thailand)?

Applicable tax should be charged based on the country in which the supplier's organisation is registered and if the supplier is a vat registered company. As the contract will be signed with British Council UK, the applicable VAT rate is UK VAT (20%).

14. Will suppliers receive participant information in advance?

- Participant information will be shared in advance
- The British Council will support distribution of a pre-training needs assessment survey
- A pre-workshop webinar may be possible, subject to participant availability

15. Trainers will need to produce a trainer's workbook and participants workbook. This will be used during the workshop in March and also for the cascade work post workshop. What resources will BC provide for preparing these workbooks?

The British Council can cover reasonable number of printings in standard quality print and simple format (approx. up to 50 pages per participants)

Other than that, bidders should include all costs related to material development, preparation, and printing (including any printed course manuals) in their proposal. The British Council can provide recommendations for local printing services.

16. In designing the workshop, can you tell us whether participants can be given pre course reading – for instance to read sample proposals?

Yes, participants can be given pre-course reading materials, such as sample proposals, in advance of the workshop.

17. During the workshop can they be asked to do some homework?

Yes, participants may be assigned homework; however, please note that they may have other commitments, and therefore the homework should not be extensively time-consuming.

18. It would be useful for participants to form prospective teams to write a proposal during the workshop. These teams could be used to submit a proposal in response to an actual call. What resources can BC provide to identify potential interest in this approach?

The British Council can support in communicating this information to the participants. It will be up to the Trainers to encourage/agree this with the participants in the session.

19. The RFP notes a webinar/online clarification session on 16 January 2026 (10:00–11:00 UK time). Was this session recorded, and if so, could the recording (or any slides/summary) be shared with bidders?

The clarification session was not recorded. However, all relevant information is included in the RFP, and all questions raised during the session have been compiled and addressed in this Clarification document.

20. In Thailand, Cambodia and Laos, to what extent is university research expected to have an impact on the policy and practices of government departments, NGOs, INGOs, voluntary organisations etc. In UK, for instance, it has becoming increasingly important to demonstrate the impact of research on non-academic audiences. This question is relevant in terms of developing curriculum content as participants need to know how to work with different stakeholders, and the appropriate modes of engagement and styles of communications

As outlined in the RFP introduction and project background Science, Research, and Innovation is crucial to Thailand government policy and is one of their priority areas. According to the Thailand Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Policy and Strategy (2023-2027) with strong expectations that university research contributes to national development goals, policy relevance, innovation outcomes, and societal benefit. For more information on the government policy, please refer to section 2.2 of the RFP.

21. Can we assume that the working language will be English?

Yes, the working language for this assignment will be English.

22. Will the entire event be face to face, or are you expecting some trainees to join remotely?

All participants are expected to attend the workshop in person.

23. Can we assume that all participant logistics (visa letters, name tags and registration, dietary requirements etc will be handled by local staff)

Yes, the British Council will manage all participant-related logistics, including participant applications, registration and name tags, as well as venue setup and catering for the workshop.

24. How long is the panel session on March 11th, and would you expect all four trainers to present/participate in that?

All four trainers will be expected to present a session for the one-day seminar. There will be other external speakers attending each session, some joining from the UK remotely.

25. Could you please confirm what time the deadline ends on 2nd February (and in what time zone)

The deadline is 23:59 on 2 February (Pakistan Standard Time), which corresponds to 18:59 UK time.

26. Could you please clarify what you mean by submission of a 'sample session'. By session, do you mean the entire 2 day course, or just a component to illustrate our style and approach? How long a session are you looking for?

Full course is not required. By “sample session,” we expect a single component or topic that demonstrates your delivery style, approach, and methodology in practice.

27. Will this Project be a one-off or will similar calls be launched in the future?

There are not currently plans to launch similar Projects but, depending on the outcomes, the British Council may seek to replicate this model in the future.

28. What does the British Council plan to do with the workshop materials once the workshop has concluded?

Workshop materials will be published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial (CC BY-NC) licence. This means that others will be free to share, adapt, and reuse the materials for non-commercial purposes and will ensure that the materials will remain available to all to support learning and knowledge exchange.