GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Worldwide Universities Network (WUN)
Research Development Fund (RDF) Award 2017/2018

The Worldwide Universities Network is a world leading research university network, tackling global challenges through international collaboration. The WUN Research Development Fund fosters innovative, international collaborative research and mobility programs.

What is the WUN Research Development Fund (RDF)?

The RDF offers grants of up to £10,000$ to foster partnership in the network, including new members as a priority, and support research collaborations in the following WUN Global Challenges (see WUN website for full description of the WUN Global Challenges):

- Responding to Climate Change
- Public Health
- Global Higher Education and Research
- Understanding Cultures

The development of research on the Global Challenges is supported by four Steering Groups, and by four cross-cutting groups that support, promote and enable a focus on Africa and China and underpinning investigations on big data and economics. The RDF provides an important mechanism for these groups to stimulate new research initiatives on the Global Challenges.

As part of the WUN Strategic Plan 2017-2020, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals will inform research priorities within the WUN Global Challenge framework. Therefore, a clear articulation of how the proposal aligns with one or more relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals within the context of the WUN Global Challenge(s) will be seen as a distinct advantage.

The RDF provides one year of seed funding with the firm expectation that projects will result in academic publications, policy impact and sustainability through securing funding from external sources.

What can RDF funds be used for?

RDF funds may cover the costs of exploratory research initiatives, targeted workshops, faculty exchanges and the formation of collaborative networks, among other activities. Applications that incorporate a research mobility component for early career researchers and postgraduate students are encouraged.

Currency converter at 29 June 2017:
GBPE1 = USD$1.30; CAD$1.69; EUR€1.14; NOK10.86; ZAR16.83; CNY8.80; HKD$10.13; AUD$1.69; NZD$1.78; TWD39.47; GHS5.73
The WUN Research Development Fund will not cover management fees, salaries or salary supplementation, purchase of capital assets, equipment depreciation, scholarships, course fees and bench fees. Where funds are to be used for air travel, only economy class fares are permissible.

**Am I eligible to apply?**

The RDF is open only to academic staff (faculty members) at WUN member universities. Applications must first be approved for submission through an internal review process at the principal investigator’s university and submitted to WUN with the sign-off of the local WUN Coordinator (see contact information at the end of this document). Programs must engage at least three WUN member universities and should span at least two countries. The collaboration can include non-WUN universities and external partners but must have an active core of WUN member universities. In the spirit of the network, activities organised through the programs should be open to all WUN members. It is a priority for WUN to engage newer members in the RDF.

Applications must commit matching cash support (total sum) by the partner institutions to equal or greater value of the amount requested. Salary payments of existing research staff will not be accepted as matching cash support.

The WUN Research Development Fund is a small, catalytic fund that aims to build collaboration around new research initiatives. In areas where similar research themes are currently active in the network, members are encouraged to build teams with existing programs where possible to consolidate bids. Likewise, if it is the opinion of the review panel that previous successful applications have been revised for consideration in subsequent rounds essentially for the purpose of top-up funding, or are beyond the seed stage in development, the proposals will not be considered.

**What are the criteria for assessment?**

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Objectives** – the program is of high academic quality and addresses a novel research problem or takes an existing WUN research program in a significantly new direction. The program is likely to have significant impact, is interdisciplinary and is international in scope.
- **Relevance to WUN Goals** – the program aligns with WUN strategic objectives and addresses a WUN Global Challenge, and where possible is informed by one or more relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Teamwork** – the program involves a team of researchers across a range of relevant disciplines and regions. Programs that include newer WUN members (defined as universities that have joined the network from 2016 onwards) constitute on competitive advantage. The integration of early-career researchers and PhD students are particularly encouraged and an outline of how this integration will be achieved should be provided.
- **Outcomes** – the program results in external funding, academic publications and/or policy options.
- **Sustainability** – the program will build long-term international relationships based on genuine commitment by the research partners, and provides a plan for attracting sufficient resources for the continuation of the project beyond the initial grant.
Applications must be accompanied by:

- Program budget outlining key areas of expenditure (a common template is provided as a download in the application).
- CV of the principal investigator (1 page maximum) with URL links to partner investigators.
- Letters of support from WUN partner universities confirming matching support, using the template provided as a download from the online application portal.

How do I apply?

Before considering a submission, prospective applicants should first contact their local WUN Coordinator (see contact information at the end of this document) well before the application deadline. The WUN Coordinator will be able to provide advice on the application and will be able to assist in developing aspects of the bid. Please note that internal deadlines at each university may differ, and therefore interested applicants should contact their local WUN Coordinator as soon as possible.

The 2017 Research Development Fund will be administered via the WUN online application platform, and will open on 15 July 2017.

All applications will be assessed and ranked by a selection committee made up of at least six members of the WUN Academic Advisory Group, the Chair of the relevant Global Challenge Steering Group and the WUN Executive Director. The outcomes of the WUN Research Development Fund will be announced on 15 December 2017.

The WUN Coordinator, along with the local WUN Academic Advisory Group (AAG) representative and a local WUN committee will be responsible for reviewing, ranking and approving applications at the university level prior to submission to WUN. A maximum of two submissions will be accepted from each WUN member university, however a university may be involved in any number of applications as a co-investigator.

Applications along with all accompanying documents must be submitted for York’s internal review no later than:

5pm GMT on Friday 29 September 2017.

Please note that applications that are incomplete or received after the closing date will not be considered, and extensions will not be possible. This deadline applies to both York-led projects and projects on which a York academic is a co-investigator.

What are the financial and reporting obligations?

Allocated funds will be deposited in GBP£ via bank transfer to the Principal Investigator’s nominated university account in February 2018. Awarded funding should be expended within 12 months. Any unspent funds at the conclusion of the 12-month award period may be recalled by WUN.
Projects awarded funding become WUN research projects and are required to submit annual reports to WUN on an ongoing basis for the life of the project beyond the initial year of the grant. This reporting is essential in assisting WUN to track outcomes in order to demonstrate productivity, return on investment and bids for subsequent grants. WUN will send a reminder and link to the online survey annually. Awardees who fail to submit satisfactory reports will be ineligible to apply for future WUN funding.

If successful, how does WUN expect to be acknowledged?

Projects awarded funding become WUN research projects and must credit WUN appropriately, including the display of the WUN logo. Any publications resulting from an RDF-funded project must acknowledge WUN as a funder.

Principal Investigators are welcome and encouraged to participate in WUN initiatives and events as they arise, including the WUN Annual General Meeting, the WUN Annual Report, Global Challenge workshops etc.

Further information

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<th>The WUN Coordinator at your university</th>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Brown</td>
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<td>WUN Coordinator</td>
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<td>E: <a href="mailto:andrew.l.brown@york.ac.uk">andrew.l.brown@york.ac.uk</a></td>
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application deadline: 29 September 2017 5pm GMT