

## **Newton-Bhabha Fund PhD Placements Programme 2018-19**

### **Call guidelines**

**Call opens: 04 June 2018**

**Call closes: 04 August 2018**

## 1. Background

Tackling global challenges such as extreme weather conditions, urbanisation, access to affordable health care, food and energy security, and meeting the social and economic needs of a growing population requires an integrated research and innovation approach, bringing together communities from different disciplines, sectors and countries in high-quality collaborations. The Newton Fund builds research and innovation partnerships to support economic development and social welfare, and develop research and innovation capacity for long-term sustainable growth. This is achieved by building the skills of doctoral scholars through cross-border research collaborations in higher education institutions.

In India, the Newton-Bhabha Fund is supported by the UK and Indian governments through a ministerial agreement and was launched to promote science and innovation partnerships between the two countries. For further information visit the Newton Fund website:

[www.newtonfund.ac.uk](http://www.newtonfund.ac.uk).

## 2. Relevance to economic development and social welfare

The Newton Bhabha Fund aims to promote the economic development and social welfare of India through working with India, to address the global societal challenges affecting people in India. It will do so through strengthening science and innovation capacity.

In order to be considered for funding under this programme, all proposals must clearly articulate a plausible pathway showing how the research may lead to positive impact and contribute to the economic development and social welfare of India. Applications which do not meet this criterion cannot receive UK Newton Fund funding.

## 3. Programme overview

The programme aims to develop individual capacity of PhD scholars by offering short-term (2 to 4 months) placements at UK or Indian higher education or research institutions. It is jointly funded by the UK government Newton Fund and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT) India with the British Council as one of the delivery partners.

PhD placements will be focused on research areas which have been identified at the country level as important for fulfilling the Newton Fund goals. For details, please refer to section 5. Priority sectors.

The approach of the programme will be scholar-centred to ensure that the best possible development experience is provided for each scholar. International exchanges should add value through enabling scholars to:

- learn valuable new skills or techniques for research
- access facilities or resources not readily available in their home country
- build relationships with potential new collaborators, including industry partners where relevant
- advance complementary collaborative research.

DST in collaboration with British Council will support up to 30 PhD scholars from India and up to 5 from the UK in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Life Sciences (From India – only INSPIRE Fellows)

DBT in collaboration with British Council will support up to 35 PhD scholars from India in Life Sciences (other than INSPIRE).

First grant instalment payments are expected to be disbursed by December 2018 and placements can take place between March to October 2019. Grants are paid in 2 instalments and are made to institutions and not directly to students.

## 4. Outcomes

The programme outcomes are to:

- develop individual capacity through international training and development opportunities
- create a cadre of highly trained researchers in the UK and India with international experience, able to contribute to the absorptive capacity for research and innovation and thus bring about economic and social benefits
- enable the participation of UK-based and Indian PhD scholars in international intellectual networks, building cultural understanding, and fostering long-term sustainable research collaborations
- create awareness of the research strength of the UK and India

## 5. Priority sectors

Applications are invited in STEM and Life Sciences subjects including the ‘grand challenges’ areas and underpinning capabilities identified by the UK-India Task Force on Science and Innovation, which are:

- Biological and Medical sciences including Life sciences, Biotechnology, Botany, Zoology, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Medicine, Pharma and Veterinary Sciences
- Engineering and Physical sciences including Physics, Chemistry, Engineering, Physical Mathematics, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Big data and Manufacturing
- Environment, Food and Agriculture Sciences
- Public health and well being

## 6. Eligibility criteria

Applications are welcome from PhD scholars from India and UK in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Life Sciences.

**For UK national applicants:** The scheme is open only for UK scholars pursuing their PhD at a UK home institution including applicants from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Applications will be considered from scholars from all institutions which are strong in research in the priority sectors described in the previous section.

**For Indian national applicants:** The scheme is open only for Indian scholars enrolled at Indian higher education institutions with the following criteria:

1. INSPIRE PhD Senior Research Fellows (SRFs) of Batch 2015 are eligible to apply for a STEM and Life Sciences subject
2. PhD Scholars (other than INSPIRE Fellows) who have qualified through national level test and are pursuing PhD in mid second or third year of Life sciences are eligible to apply. The following national level tests are considered: CSIR/UGC-NET, GATE, BET, ICMR-NET, ICAR-NET. Please upload a certificate of the national level test passed as a supporting document.

**For both Indian and UK scholars:**

- Applicants should have a valid passport before applying.
- Applicants are required to submit their PhD thesis only after completion of the placement.

Please refer to the detailed eligibility criteria in Annex 1.

## 7. Application guidelines, process and funding arrangements

### 7.1. Application guidelines

Applications should be accompanied with endorsement letters from both the sending and receiving institutes, signed by Head of Department (or equivalent).

The letter from the host institution must confirm that they will host the PhD scholar and provide details of all academic and pastoral support, the duration of the stay and the level of bench fees they will charge.

Endorsement letters from UK universities should outline bench fees, if any, that will be charged. In addition, if any registration or other fees are charged, these should be disclosed to the applicant in advance.

*Please note: applications without the endorsement letters will not be considered for funding.*

### 7.2. Application process

**Indian applicants** should submit the form online by clicking [here](#):

**UK applicants** should submit the form online by clicking [here](#):

The deadline for receipt of applications is 4 August 2018 . Results are expected to be announced in October.

N.B. Candidates applying in Life Sciences from India should submit a hard copy of uploaded form with supporting documents to DBT as detailed in contact points at S. No. 13

### 7.3. Funding arrangements for UK scholars

The **British Council** will fund the travel grant maximum upto £ 900 GBP to cover the following items as part of Newton-Bhabha Fund:

- UK scholars' travel - international return airfare (economy class)
- visa fees to India
- travel insurance (if required)

**DST or DBT** (as relevant per subject area) will cover the following items:

- UK scholars' arrival allowance in India – INR 10,000

- UK scholars' stipend in India – INR 25,000 - The Indian Government will pay UK scholars a monthly stipend of INR 25,000 @10%,20% or 30% of stipend, based on the class of city, basic medical care insurance.
- UK scholars need to arrange their accommodation either in host institution or off-site before departing to India for their convenience. DST/DBT will release accommodation allowance @ 10%,20% or 30% of stipend based on the class of city as per Government of India norms.
- UK scholars will be exempted from tuition fees, experiment fees and basic teaching material costs. Costs beyond the above arrangements will be borne by the scholars themselves.

#### 7.4. Funding arrangements for Indian scholars

The **British Council** will cover the following items:

- Indian scholars' bench fees in the UK : Maximum £5,000, where the UK host university cannot waive the bench fees (or consumables costs). The UK host supervisor can apply for this bench fees by stating the amount in the endorsement letter. In addition to this applicant should also enter this amount in his/her application form.
- Indian scholars' stipend in the UK @ £1300 per month: The Newton-Bhabha Fund will pay Indian scholars a monthly stipend of £1,300 to cover meals, accommodation and domestic travel, etc.

**DST or DBT** (as relevant per subject area) will cover the following items:

- Indian scholars' visa fees
- Indian scholars' international return airfares (economy class) as per Government of India (GOI) norms
- Indian scholars' travel insurance as per GOI norms

#### 7.5. Evaluation criteria

Scholars should ensure their applications meet the following criteria which are the principles underlying candidate assessment:

- all questions on the application form are answered
- the activities are planned to deliver the outcomes in the most effective manner
- the application articulates a plausible pathway showing how the research may lead to positive impact and contribute in to the economic development and social welfare of India
- the placement will add value to the PhD research and to the activities of the two research groups

- the support offered to the researcher will ensure that the placement is as productive as possible and facilitates cascading of learning gained through the placement
- the research is relevant to the priority sectors (mentioned above) of the Newton-Bhabha Programme
- the mobility programme will contribute towards developing a long term sustainable partnership between UK and Indian universities
- the scholar will return to complete their PhD at their home university

## 7.6. Evaluation process

The British Council, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT) India will conduct the first level of assessment independently and shortlist scholars. Following this, a joint panel between the agencies will be organized to take a final decision.

Applications will be screened for their relevance to the priority sectors (mentioned above) of the Newton-Bhabha Fund programme and to the economic development and social welfare of India.

## 8. Contracting and financial arrangements

### 8.1. For UK PhD scholars

The **British Council** will sign a Grant Agreement with the UK home institution to disburse the UK scholar's airfare, visa fees and insurance. The UK home institution will be responsible for disbursing the grant to the respective scholar.

The British Council will disburse the grant to UK home institution after receiving the signed Grant Agreement from the UK home institution within the specified timeline which will be notified as a part of the Grant Agreement. The home institution / scholar is responsible for submitting receipts for the cost of visa, airfare and insurance along with the final report to British Council.

**DST or DBT** (as relevant per subject area) will inform Indian host institutions of the final selection of UK scholars and will release funds towards scholars per month stipend, accommodation and one-time travel allowance to the Indian institution followed by sending a sanction letter. Indian host institution will be responsible for disbursing the grant to the respective scholar.

## 8.2. For Indian PhD Scholars

The **British Council** will sign a Grant Agreement with UK host Institution to disburse stipend and bench fees (if any) for the Indian scholar. The grant will only be released once the British Council receives a signed Grant Agreement from the UK host institution within the specified timeline which will be notified as a part of the grant agreement. The UK host institution will be responsible for disbursing the stipend to the respective Indian scholar.

**DST or DBT** will release the funds for Indian PhD scholars to their respective Indian home institutions followed by sending a sanction letter. Their Indian Home institutions will disburse that money for their Visa, Airfare and Insurance as per Government of India norms to the scholar. (This will also be mentioned in the sanction order).

## 8.3. Grant disbursement for both Indian and UK Scholars

90% percent of the total grant will be disbursed to the home / host institution (whichever applicable) before the placement begins. The remaining 10% percent will be disbursed after completing the placement and submitting the financial and narrative reports to both British Council and DST / DBT provided that the final report demonstrates that the placement has been completed as planned. If this is not the case, the British Council may recover a portion of the grant.

The UK and Indian institute which receives the grant will be responsible for:

- managing the grant, including paying the same to scholars.
- provision of financial accounts to detail how the British Council / DST or DBT funds have been spent on each PhD scholar over the reporting periods
- alerting the British Council / DST or DBT (as relevant per subject area) on any substantive changes that will impact on project outcomes.

See section 12 for further information regarding contracting.

## 9. Support to PhD scholars

The Newton-Bhabha PhD Placements programme expects that host institutions offer high standards of supervision, management and mentoring to placement scholars. Applicants must consider the following in their proposals :

- The standards of supervision, management and mentoring provided by the host institution
- Experience of the supervisors to train and mentor doctoral scholars to provide the highest quality supervisory support for their doctoral scholars

- Mechanisms that are in place to assess, provide for and monitor individual doctoral student needs and offer the student appropriate development opportunities
- Professional and transferable skills training offered to doctoral scholars, including training in the principles of good research conduct in their discipline and in the relevant ethical, legal and professional frameworks
- Learning and training opportunities available to doctoral scholars to raise awareness of the broader context of their research area, particularly in reference to societal and ethical issues, and the importance of engaging the public with research.
- UK scholars may explore a list of Indian institutes ranked by Ministry of Human Resource Development here: <https://www.nirfindia.org/2018/Ranking2018.html>. However, this source does the exploration of other relevant institutions. For support in identifying Indian institutes for the aforementioned priority sectors please contact Purti Kohli (see section 13).
- Indian scholars may visit [student support service](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/International/funding-and-opportunities/Pages/student-support-services.aspx) to identify UK institutions. More information: <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/International/funding-and-opportunities/Pages/student-support-services.aspx>

For further information on UK standards for doctoral training, please refer to the Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training at [www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/skills/statementofexpectation-pdf/](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/skills/statementofexpectation-pdf/)

## 10. Reporting and monitoring

- Selected scholars will be asked to complete an online baseline survey before the placement begins and a follow-up survey after six months of the placement.
- Beneficiary and host institutions must submit both financial and narrative reports to the British Council and DST/DBT respectively within 30 days of completion of their placement. Details will be shared with the selected scholars.
- If the PhD scholar withdraws from studies or is unable to complete the period of the placement, they must immediately inform the British Council, DBT or DST as relevant explaining their decision, and submitting a letter showing the agreement of their supervisor.
- If the scholar is unable to complete full tenure of the placement at the host institute, their final report should demonstrate that the objectives of the placement are met, and placement has been completed as planned.

**Key dates:**

| Activity detail                                    | Dates   |
|--|---|
| Call announcement                                  | 04 June 2018                                      |
| Call closes  | 04 August 2018                                    |
| Announcement of results                            | October 2018                                      |
| Placements to be undertaken                        | March to October 2019                             |
| Report submission to British Council and DST / DBT | Within 30 days of the completion of the placement |

## 11. Diversity and Data Protection

### Diversity

The British Council is committed to equal opportunities and diversity in all our activities. This includes avoidance of bias due to gender, disability, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or religious belief.

### Data protection

The British Council will use the information that you are providing for the purposes of processing your application, making any awards, monitoring and review of any award.

We shall share any necessary data on your application with the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and with our funding partners in your country in order to assist with management of the application process; any decisions on grants will be made in collaboration with them.

Organization details, where collected, are used for monitoring and evaluation and statistical purposes. Gender information, where collected, is used solely in preparing statistical reports.

The British Council collects country of origin for reporting and statistical purposes and to contact you within your own country.

Under UK Data Protection law, you have the right to ask for a copy of the information we hold on you, and the right to ask us to correct any inaccuracies in that information. If you want more information about this please contact your local British Council office or the Data Protection Team at [infogovernance@britishcouncil.org](mailto:infogovernance@britishcouncil.org) or see our website:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection>.

## 12. Contractual requirements of British Council

- The contracting authority is the British Council which includes any subsidiary companies and other organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council from time to time (see: [www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status](http://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/structure/status)).
- Successful Indian applicants will be expected to undertake activities in the UK and successful UK applicants will be expected to undertake activities in India.
- The British Council's contractual approach in respect of the grant (Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement) ("Grant Agreement") is captured in the Downloads section of this call announcement. By submitting a response to this call for applications, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of these guidelines and the Grant Agreement without further negotiation or amendment.
- In the event that you have any concerns or queries in relation to the Grant Agreement, submit a clarification request to Purni Kolhi (see section 13) in accordance with the provisions of this call for applications by the application deadline. The British Council reserves the right not to make any changes to the Grant Agreement.
- The British Council is under no obligation to consider any clarifications / amendments to the Grant Agreement requested following the application deadline.

## 13. Contact

### **British Council – India**

Purti Kohli  
Senior Project Manager – HE&S  
British Council Division  
17, Kasturba Gandhi Marg  
New Delhi - 110001  
Email: [purti.kohli@britishcouncil.org](mailto:purti.kohli@britishcouncil.org) or [newton@in.britishcouncil.org](mailto:newton@in.britishcouncil.org)

### **DST (INSPIRE Fellows) – India**

Dr S. Mallikarjuna Babu,  
**Scientist-C**  
DST-INSPIRE Division  
Room No. 22, S&T Block III,  
Department of Science and Technology,  
Technology Bhawan, New Mehrouli Road,  
New Delhi - 110016  
Ph: 011 26590268  
Email: [sm.babu@nic.in](mailto:sm.babu@nic.in)

### **DBT – India**

Dr. Amit P. Parikh  
Scientist  
Room No. 814 Block 2  
Division of International Cooperation  
Department of Biotechnology  
CGO Complex, Lodi Road,  
New Delhi – 110 003  
Email: [icone@dbt.nic.in](mailto:icone@dbt.nic.in)

**For DBT: Please send hard copy of the application form to the address above in addition to the online submission.**

## Annexure 1: Eligibility criteria checklist

|   |  |
|---|--|
| For UK Scholars - The UK Host Institution must be an eligible research institution or recognized higher education institution (list of eligible research institutes is provided under call announcement documents)  |  |
| For UK Scholars - You are undertaking your PhD at an eligible research institution or recognized higher education institution (list of eligible research institutes is provided under call announcement documents)  |  |
| If you are applying for Life Sciences (other than INSPIRE Fellows), then you should be in second or third year of your PhD at an Indian institution and meet eligibility criteria   |  |
| If you are an INSPIRE PhD Senior Research Fellow applying for STEM and Life Sciences subjects, then you should be of batch 2015 and shall upload up to date progress report approved by supervisor at supporting information in online application format |  |
| The application has been submitted by the applicant with in the published deadline.   |  |
| The application has been submitted using the correct online application form.   |  |
| The applicant has enclosed the supplementary documents required, including confirmation from the host university that they will accept the scholar and support them with their research.  |  |
| The application form is completed in full and complies with instructions given.   |  |
| The application form and supporting documents have been completed in English.   |  |
| The applicant has submitted only 1 application under this call.   |  |
| The home institution is based in India or UK  |  |
| The mobility will take place as per details captured under “Key Dates” of Section 9   |  |
| The applicant will return to his/her home institution to complete their PhD after the end of the visit (demonstrated via the supporting letter from the institution).   |  |
| The home institution is a recognised publicly funded research establishment or Higher Education Institution (can include private Universities).   |  |
| The host institution is a recognised publicly funded research establishment or Higher Education Institution (can include private Universities).   |  |
| The applicant has not received a Newton Bhabha Fund PhD placement grant in previous rounds  |  |