Going Global Partnerships

**Guidance Notes**

**International Skills Partnership South Africa**

Call is open 31 January 2025 – 21 February 2025

Grant call for international skills partnership in South Africa

Going Global Partnerships

[Going Global Partnerships](https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/he-science/going-global-partnerships) builds stronger, more inclusive, internationally connected higher education (HE) and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) systems.

Through international partnerships, system collaborations and opportunities to connect and share, we enable stronger transnational education, more collaborative research, higher quality delivery, enhanced learner outcomes and stronger, internationalised, equitable and inclusive systems and institutions.

We help to strengthen higher education and TVET in five core areas:

* **Enabling research** – supporting research, knowledge and innovation collaborations to address local and global challenges and promote inclusive growth.
* **Internationalising higher education and TVET** – supporting systems, institutions and individuals to benefit from internationalisation, including enabling transnational education and system alignment.
* **Strengthening systems and institutions** – improving the quality and efficiency of higher education and TVET institutions and systems.
* **Enhancing learner outcomes** – addressing the qualities of the global graduate, including soft skills, employability and community outcomes.
* **Increasing equality, diversity and inclusion** – making higher education and TVET more accessible, equitable and accountable.

See open and upcoming Going Global Partnerships opportunities [on our portal](https://education-services.britishcouncil.org/opportunities?sort_by=created&field_programme_tid%5B%5D=404).

Opportunities are being launched continually, so please check this page regularly.

**International Skills Partnership opportunity in South Africa**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Value of grant | £25,000 |
| Deadline for applications | 21 February 2025 Time: 23:59 GMT |
| Contact for further information | Louise.greer@britishcouncil.org  |

**About the Grant call**

**Introduction**

British Council international skills partnerships bring together organisations in the TVET sector from the UK and overseas to share their knowledge and expertise, and to collaborate on projects that focus on enhancing approaches to skills development internationally.

Since 2009, British Council, has delivered over 200 partnership projects linking UK further education colleges to over 40 countries. These partnerships have brought together experienced organisations in the UK skills sector and one or more counterparts in other countries to develop and deliver an agreed project plan that supports national level policy priorities related to skills development and employability, such as embedding soft skills development in curricula; improving employer engagement; quality assurance; development of joint curricula; and career guidance programmes.

Partnerships are supported financially by the British Council to deliver projects, typically funded for one year with a view to becoming self-sustaining thereafter.

Participating organisations benefit in a number of ways, from improving their offer to learners and building staff capacity, to gaining exposure to new markets and raising their reputation.

**Overview of the partnership opportunity**

The British Council has been present in South Africa for over 60 years, supporting international collaboration to develop better quality, more inclusive and globally connected education systems. As part of this work, for over ten years, we have facilitated successful partnerships between further education colleges and training providers in South Africa and the UK.

We work with the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Sector Education Training Authorities and TVET colleges to support reform of technical and vocational education and create opportunities for collaboration with the UK. This has included the VET Toolbox project, co-funded by the European Union and by the German government, through which a quality assurance ‘maturity model’ was completed and piloted, as well institutional partnerships and a regional seminar on green skills delivered through our Going Global Partnerships programme.

Supporting development of skills for green jobs and greening of the TVET system has been a big focus our work in the country. South Africa is committed to a just transition to a ‘*resource efficient, low carbon and pro-employment’* economy, which in the long term achieves sustainable development that addresses ‘*interdependencies between economic growth, social protection and natural ecosystem’.[[1]](#footnote-2)* Being signatories to the Paris Agreement on climate change, both South Africa and the United Kingdom have a common goal of protecting the environment and supporting each other to achieve their nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

We work closely with the Energy & Water Sector Education Training Authority (**EWSETA**), a skills development authority serving the energy and water sectors. Among the objectives of our collaboration is to improve the energy-related training offer with a skills programme in an emerging sector of hydrogen fuel cell technology. The development of a thriving low carbon hydrogen sector is an important priority for the governments of South Africa and the UK and they share a skills gap challenge in this nascent field. To support collaboration in this area, the British Council is pleased to announce two partnership opportunities for UK-based skills organisations to collaborate respectively with [Northern Cape Rural TVET College](https://ncrtvet.com/) and [Nkangala TVET College](https://www.ntc.edu.za/) in South Africa with a focus on the renewable energy sector, in particular, hydrogen fuel cell technology. These colleges have both been identified by EWSETA to develop capacity in the field of hydrogen technology. Northern Cape Rural TVET College is part of the South African Department of Higher Education and Training’s (DHET) Skills Development Zone for hydrogen. Nkangala is located in close proximity to Sasol, a hydrogen industry user and private sector organisation.

The UK and South African partners will share knowledge and expertise on curriculum development and employer engagement in the area of clean energy technologies, in particular, hydrogen fuel cell technology, and will collaborate to deliver a jointly developed action plan.

The successful UK institution will have demonstrable experience in curriculum development and a training offer in hydrogen fuel cell technology as part of their broader engineering, renewable energy, or sustainable technology programmes.

The British Council teams in the UK and in South Africa will provide ongoing advice and guidance throughout the partnership to help facilitate communication and deliver maximum benefit. We will also share relevant British Council tools and materials to support the project activities.

Successful applicants will be eligible for **£25 000** of grant funding to support partnership activities. The grant will cover reciprocal visits to the UK and South Africa, staff time (limited to 30% of the grant), development of tools and resources. The project will be funded for 12 months, starting from end March 2025.

**Eligibility criteria for Institutions**

Applications must fulfil the following criteria to be eligible for funding under this call:

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| ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA |
| Each proposal must have one Lead institution from the UK |
| UK Lead institution must be one of the following: * Further education college
* Independent training provider
* Membership organisation with a role in the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET)/Further Education (FE) system
* Sector skills organisation
* Awarding body
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| The partnership can include in their proposals Associated Partners which can be one of the following: * Employer organisations and industry bodies
* Other education organisations/charities/foundations/membership bodies
* Any other public or private organisations with a role in TVET/Further Education system
* Not-for-profit organisations, including Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
* Government organisations
* Civil society organisations (CSOs) and social enterprise organisations
 |
| For-profit non-education organisations are not eligible to receive any grant funds, except to cover travel-associated costs. |

If you are in doubt about the eligibility of your organisation, contact skills@britishcouncil.org .

Eligibility checks will be applied to all applications after the grant call closes and those which are not led by an eligible institution, rejected.

**Funding**

Funds will be transferred directly to the Contracting Institution from the UK, who will be responsible for submitting a financial report upon completion of the project.

For an equitable partnership, the Contracting Institution should be able to timely transfer funding to the partnering institution(s) from overseas for activities which support the objectives of the collaboration and the overall project, allowing activities implementation to be implemented without delay.

For-profit non-education Associated Partners are only eligible to receive funds to cover travel-associated costs.

Matching funds are encouraged but not a requirement.

Ethics

It is essential that all legal and professional codes of practice are followed in conducting work supported by this call. Applicants must ensure the proposed activity will be carried out to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity.

In the application form, applicants must clearly articulate how any potential ethical and health and safety issues have been considered and how they will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the project commences and all risks are minimised.

Please refer to the Research Councils UK ‘Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research’ (<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/UKRI-050321-PolicyGuidelinesGovernanceOfGoodResearchConduct.pdf>) , the Inter Academy Partnership report ‘Doing Global Science: A Guide to Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise’ (**http://www.interacademycouncil.net/24026/29429.aspx**) or contact us for further guidance.

Safeguarding and protecting adults at risk

The British Council is committed to safeguarding children and adults at risk and to upholding their rights in accordance with all applicable legislation and statutory guidance. As part of that commitment, we require that all staff, and those we work with, including partners and suppliers, operate within our Safeguarding Policy which articulates our approach to protecting children and adults at risk and promoting their wellbeing.

We have robust systems and procedures in place to both prevent incidents (covering, for example, the recruitment of appropriate staff, training and support given so that staff can work safely, and standards regarding the way in which we carry out activities) together with responsive actions necessary to address situations where we become aware that a child or an adult at risk may have been harmed. As part of our policy, all countries have a named Safeguarding Focal Point (SFP) who is supported by a Regional Safeguarding Manager (RSM) and the British Council Safeguarding Team.

For further information please see: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/how-we-work/policies/safeguarding>

**Privacy Notice**

The British Council and UK partners comply with UK GDPR and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and data protection laws in other countries that meet internationally accepted standards. The British Council will use the information that you provide for the purposes of processing your application, making any awards and the monitoring & review of any grants. The legal basis for processing your information is agreement with our terms and conditions of application (contract).

Organisation details, where collected, are used for monitoring and evaluation and statistical purposes. Gender information and country of origin, where collected, is used solely for statistical purposes. If we need to contact you, we will do so using the contact details you have provided.

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 see our website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection>. We will keep your information for a period of seven years after the project.

**Application Process and Documentation**

All applications should be sent to: skills@britishcouncil.org

The deadline for applications is 23:59 on 21st February 2025 – we recommend that you send at least an hour before to avoid any last-minute technical glitches.

Due to the volume of applications, we receive, any application received after specified deadline will be considered **ineligible.**

Gender and EDI Statements

Applicants are encouraged to ensure equal opportunities in the teams implementing their proposed activity. Applicants may apply for additional funding to cover any specific requirements necessary to ensure full participation.

Please make additional costs in the ‘human resources’ section of the budget request within your application. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Please contact us for further information on the British Council’s approach. See our Equality Policy here: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/about-us/our-values/equality-diversity-inclusion>

Gender Equality

To comply with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, applications must outline how they have taken meaningful yet proportionate consideration as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities in the Gender Equality Statement section of the application form.

**Gender Equality Statement**

Applicants are required to consider the impact their project will have on gender and provide a gender statement. It should not be a re-statement of your Institution’s policy; you may refer to the policy but should show how the policy will be implemented in terms of the project.

Below are the project aspects that can be taken into consideration for the gender statement but not limited to.

* Outputs
* Outcomes
* Make-up of the project team; participants, stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project
* Processes followed throughout the project.

The statement is part of the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) assessment criterion in this call. The following questions should be answered when writing the statement.

* Have measures been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different genders to be involved throughout the project? This includes the development of the project, the participants of the research and innovation, and the beneficiaries of the activities.
* The expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond.
* The impact on the relations between people of different genders and people of the same gender. For example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power, etc.
* How will any risks and unintended negative consequences on gender equality be avoided or mitigated against, and monitored?
* Are there any relevant outcomes and outputs being measured, with data disaggregated by age and gender (where disclosed)?

Not all questions will be applicable. If a question is not applicable, you will need to articulate the reasons why.

British Council reserve the right to reject the application if no consideration has been given to gender equality or if the proposal is assessed to result in a negative impact for gender equality.

**Assessment Criteria**

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| --- | --- |
|  | Weight % |
| Background and Relevant Experience | 35 |
| Project Approach | 40 |
| Experience of Project Budget and Financial Management | 10 |
| Gender and Equality Statement | 15 |

**Key Milestones**

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| --- | --- |
| Milestone  | Timelines  |
| Deadline for applications | 21 February 2025 |
| Date by which applications are acknowledged | 26 February 2025 |
| Results announcement | 3 March 2025  |
| Contracts signed | 21 March 2025  |
| Period of grant payments | 30 March 2025 – 30 March 2026 |

All dates may be subject to change if the call received significantly more applications than expected.

Applicant screening

In order to comply with UK government legislation, the British Council may at any point during the application process, carry out searches of relevant third-party screening databases to ensure that neither the applicant institutions nor any of the applicants’ employees, partners, directors, shareholders are listed:

* as an individual or entity with whom national or supranational bodies have decreed organisations should not have financial dealings;
* as being wanted by Interpol or any national law enforcement body in connection with crime;
* as being subject to regulatory action by a national or international enforcement body;
* as being subject to export, trade or procurement controls or (in the case of an individual) as being disqualified from being a company director; and/or
* as being a heightened risk individual or organisation, or (in the case of an individual) a politically exposed person.

If the applicant or any other party is listed in a Screening Database for any of the reasons set out above, the British Council will assess the applicant as ineligible to apply for this grant call.

The applicant must provide the British Council with all information reasonably requested by the British Council to complete the screening searches.

Please read the text to this effect on the application form and tick the box to show that you understand this.

Please consider flexible and technological solutions to progress activity for planned work where feasible.

British Council contractual requirements

* 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)).
* The Grant Agreement Holder for the partnership will be the Contracting Institution.
* The successful applicants will be expected to undertake activities in the UK and in the overseas countries listed in these guidelines.
* The British Council is subject to the requirements of the UK Freedom of Information Act, (“FOIA”). Please indicate in your application whether FOIA also applies to your organisation, so that we can reflect this in the Grant Agreement should you be successful in your application.
* (Terms and Conditions of the Grant Agreement) (“Grant Agreement”). **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.**
* It is essential that all individuals travelling (including the Recipient, the Project Partner and all Sub-Grantees involved in the Project) should have adequate travel and medical insurance for their participation in reciprocal visits. This insurance is an eligible cost under travel as set out in the grant agreement (Schedule 4).
* In the event that you have any concerns or queries in relation to the Grant Agreement, you should submit a clarification request to skills@britishcouncil.org 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.

**Annex 1 – Eligible and ineligible costs**

**Eligible costs**

The following costs are eligible for funding:

* Travel: Travel (economy class) and subsistence costs to the UK/partner country, visa fees, vaccinations, quarantine costs (not exceeding GBP800 per person for 14 days), medical and travel insurance, and roaming charges during travel essential to the project, to the UK and partner country. The maximum number of staff travelling on any visit covered by the grant is four, guided by the cost of travel when booking.
* Local travel in the UK and overseas (public transport to and from the airport and for meetings/visits is encouraged where possible).
* Reasonable accommodation and subsistence costs for staff when visiting their partner organisation in the UK or overseas.
* Staff costs for personnel working directly on the grant-funded project limited to 30% of the grant to be awarded.
* Reasonable hospitality costs (excluding self-entertaining costs).
* Reasonable production costs (such as for the development of materials but excluding time spent by staff in relation thereto).
* Essential equipment for use in the project including consumables, specialist software licences essential to the collaboration, access fees for facilities or library services. Equipment must be essential to project delivery and beyond the scope of institutional provision.
* Cost of meetings, training events, workshops, public engagement events, and seminars integral to the proposal. Translation and interpreter fees.
* Publication costs directly related to the collaboration, including web page development by external providers, if appropriate. Open access publication is encouraged.
* Online platform and relevant costs for digital delivery can be included.
* Attendance at conferences or other events in the UK, partner countries, or virtual events to present the outputs and outcomes of the project.
* All the foregoing activities must be directly related to the development and delivery of the agreed project. Partners will be asked to provide the British Council with information on expenditure, supported by receipts for monitoring and auditing purposes.

**Ineligible costs**

The following costs are ineligible for funding:

* Promotional activities solely concerned with the recruitment of overseas students.
* Institutional overheads including administration fees and other indirect costs.
* Costs associated with Master’s and PhD scholarships (including stipends).
* Purchase or rental of standard office equipment (except specialist equipment essential to the research). This includes IT hardware – laptops, personal computers, tablets, smartphones, Mac workstations, computer parts and peripherals, etc. Any standard hardware routinely used by researchers and academics will not be funded.
* Office software and office equipment including desks, chairs, filing cabinets, photocopiers, printers, and fax machines.
* Mobile phone costs including rental or purchase, and monthly phone bills.
* Exchange rate costs/losses and other banking-related costs.
* IP costs, patent, copyright, licensing, or other IP-related costs.
* Costs relating to the construction, procurement, or rental of physical infrastructure (e.g., office buildings, laboratory facilities). Rooms and facilities essential for routine collaboration are provided as an in-kind contribution by participating institutions. These can be detailed as an in- kind contribution in the budget breakdown.
* Entertainment costs such as gifts, alcohol, restaurant bills, or hospitality costs for personnel not directly participating in the project, excessive restaurant costs, and excessive taxi fares.
* No profit or fees must be charged to the grant.
1. <https://www.dffe.gov.za/projectsprogrammes/greeneconomy/introduction#:~:text=South%20Africa%20views%20green%20economy%20as%20a%20sustainable,between%20economic%20growth%2C%20social%20protection%20and%20natural%20ecosystem>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)