

RESEARCHER LINKS

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NEWTON FUND LATIN AMERICA RESEARCHER LINKS TRAVEL GRANTS GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS AUGUST 2017 VERSION 0.12

Countries included in this call are:

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru

Call opens: 14 AUGUST 2017

Call closes: 13 OCTOBER 2017

1. Background

The Newton Fund builds research and innovation partnerships with 17 partner countries to support their economic development and social welfare, and to develop their research and innovation capacity for long-term sustainable growth. It has a total UK Government investment of £735 million up until 2021, with matched resources from partner countries.

The Newton Fund is managed by the UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and delivered through 15 UK delivery partners, which include the Research Councils, the UK Academies, The British Council, Innovate UK and the Met Office. For further information visit the Newton Fund website at www.newtonfund.ac.uk.

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.

Newton Fund Researcher Links Travel Grants provide financial support for early career researchers in a Newton Fund partner country to visit an institution in the UK or vice versa.

Background and Structure of Biodiversity Programme

A common challenge in Latin America is to develop a resilient natural resource economy. Social and economic policy linked to environmental pressures will result in land-use changes that will influence biodiversity and ecosystem processes at multiple scales. Moving to a natural resource economy will necessitate radical improvements in the quality and quantity of information on the biodiversity and the ecosystem services the biodiversity sits within. To deliver this economy, data on Latin American biodiversity provide essential knowledge underpinning conservation, sustainable management and our understanding of ecosystem functions and the services they

provide. In many areas the data required for the next-generation models of ecosystem function and landscape scale management are lacking.

Understanding the role of biodiversity underpinning ecosystem services and benefits is key in managing environments for sustainable development. To achieve this across Latin America requires a transnational collaborative research activity to identify biodiversity at new levels of detail, understand ecosystems functions and their value, creating knowledge leading to informed environmental management and restoration, balanced with economic and social development needs. Such activity will align to several SDGs including: 8 (promote the Bio-economy), 12 (understand the value of land management), 15, (protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss"). See more broad context described in Appendix 5.

Phase 1 (this call)- Capacity and networks

Led by the British Council, this phase will create capacity building and mobility schemes in the first year of the programme to increase the countries' R&D capacity and boost interaction between Latin American (LATAM) countries and the UK; setting a stronger foundation for large scale research collaboration. The output will be the increased capacity of a multi-lateral research community; further development of the thematic lines of a research programme identified by the funders; research networking aligned to the thematic areas.

Phase 2 – Research programme phase led by NERC

This will be a multi-lateral research call based on the thematic areas identified by the Latin American funders and developed within the workshops of Phase 1. The proposed research areas is complex and challenging because it requires a mix of disciplines ranging from taxonomy, landscape ecology, soil science and more general ecosystem science; EO, eDNA and modelling expertise, social and economic expertise. The research programmes will be expected, where possible, to work with and data share with the expeditions supported within phase 2. This final phase will be launched later in the year.

2. Overview of the funding opportunity

The aim of this programme “Biodiversity – ecosystem services for sustainable development” is through collaborative multinational research and capacity building to provide trans-regional level understanding of the role of biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and the services they provide in managing environments for sustainable development, such that informed environmental management is balanced with economic and social development needs (for more information on priority areas see Section 4 and Appendix 5).

Researcher Links Travel Grants are designed to enhance and strengthen links for future collaboration, build research capacity in developing economies and enhance the researchers' career opportunities. The call is open to **early and established** career researchers meeting the requirements listed below, including, but not limited to, previous participants in Researcher Links workshops. The permitted duration of the visit depends on the country of origin and country of destination. The programme is supported by UK government and partner country funding and forms part of the Newton Fund.

Useful links can be found at:

- Researcher Links: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/researcher-links>
- Newton Fund: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/newton>.

Proposals may be for visits for research in any discipline listed in section 4 below and Appendix 5, from the natural sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities.

Please see Appendix 1 for country specific guidance.

In the August 2017 call, we are inviting proposals for Researcher Links Travel Grants for travel to or from the following partner countries and UK:

- Argentina
- The State of Sao Paulo, Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Mexico
- Peru

3. Scope of the programme

All Newton Fund Researcher Links Travel Grants have the following three overarching objectives:

- **Support international development-relevant research** – Travel Grants are intended to support research areas relevant to the economic development and social welfare of partner countries.
- **Contribute to capacity building of early career researchers** – The proposal should include a description of the capacity building potential of the project (both for the individual applicant, and other potential beneficiaries), and the longer term impact that the project could achieve.
- **Establish new research links or develop existing links** – Travel Grants are intended to either support new links, or to develop existing links with the potential for longer term sustainability. Applications to return to the research group where the applicant carried out their PhD research or have previously taught will only be considered if they clearly demonstrate the latter.

In their proposal applicants must include:

- the specific outputs anticipated from the visit
- an explanation of the benefit to researchers and their institutions
- exploration of any potential longer term benefit that might arise, thinking about who might benefit and how, and describing the actions that will be taken to ensure that potential impact is realised a clear description of how the individuals and research groups involved intend to sustain their collaboration.

Travel grants are not intended to cover travel costs for a conference abroad, or to fund travel as part of PhD studies.

4. Relevance to economic development and social welfare

Researcher Links Travel Grants are intended to support research areas relevant to the development of partner countries.

We define research with development relevance as research (applied or fundamental) that has the potential to contribute to the economic development and social welfare of low- and middle- income countries¹, benefitting low income and vulnerable populations in these countries. **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 on these populations within a reasonable timeframe (within 3–15 years). Applications which do not meet this criterion cannot receive UK Newton Fund support.**

In some disciplines, development relevance can be longer-term and less direct than in other areas and impact may be societal. In all cases, it is the responsibility of the applicant to articulate how the research area or activity proposed will meet these criteria. Applicants should not expect reviewers to make assumptions about development impact that is not clearly described within the proposal.

In order to show development relevance within the context of their proposed project, applicants are encouraged to include reference to any local or national consultation, links to government policies, and any links with government institutions.

For more on our approach to ODA, please see <http://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/about/what-is-oda/>.

Agreements for ownership and exploitation of intellectual property generated through project activities must be consistent with the primary aim of addressing development issues.

Under this call, the following research and innovation challenge areas will be given priority (**refer to Appendix 5 for more detailed information**). Multidisciplinary proposals are welcome, and may include Social Sciences and Arts and Humanities. The challenge areas are as follows:

- 1. Understanding habitats and species
- 2. Biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods and bio-economy
- 3. Global Climate Change, Biodiversity and ecosystems
- 4. Maintaining and restoring natural capital

5. Eligibility

Applicants must be based either in the UK, or in one of the partner countries listed in Appendix 1, and must be affiliated with a recognised publicly funded research establishment or public or private Higher Education and Research Institution. **For-profit organisations are not eligible to receive any grant funds.** Please see a list of eligible UK research institutions at:

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/eligible_uk_research_organisations_v.10.pdf

For country specific information on applicants eligibility, please check Appendix 1.

Applicants can be early or established career researchers and exceptions can be made on a case by case basis, if in doubt about eligibility please refer your question to natalia.toledo@britishcouncil.org. For the purpose of this call, we define 'early career researcher' as being at the level of 'R2 – Recognised Researcher' or at the very beginning of R3 level as specified in the European Framework for Research Careers 'Towards a European framework for research careers' for guidance on early career researcher profiles (https://cdn5.euraxess.org/sites/default/files/policy_library/towards_a_european_framework_for_research_careers_final.pdf).

If a researcher obtained their PhD within the past ten years but holds a senior position they may be considered a Senior Researcher.

¹ As defined by the OECD DAC list of official development assistance (ODA) recipients (<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/daclist.htm>).

Please see Appendix 1 for country-specific exceptions.

A supporting letter must be provided to confirm that the applicant will return to their home institution in a research capacity for at least six months after the end of the visit.

Applicants can be of any nationality, but they must be able to secure a visa for the country which they plan to visit (please see Appendix 1 for exceptions).

Travel may only be between the UK and partner country, but can be in either direction (please see Appendix 1 for exceptions).

Individuals who have participated in Researcher Links Workshops are eligible and are welcome to apply for a Travel Grant to build on any research links made at the workshop.

Individual applicants who have previously received a Researcher Links Travel Grant are not eligible.

Only one application may be submitted per researcher. Duplicate applications are ineligible, even if they are to different countries.

Travel must take place between 1 March 2018 to 31 August 2018.

6. Funding

Applicants must provide a budget request with their proposal.

The Travel Grant is calculated using five flat rate categories: Travel, Visa, Insurance, Subsistence, Consumables.

Additional support based on direct costs can be requested to contribute towards extra costs of the visit associated with childcare or special needs. These will be approved on a case by case basis.

Please see Appendix 4 for maximum amounts that can be requested in each budget category for each country and for details on financial reporting.

The flat rates are designed to make funding easier to manage. Successful applicants will be able to use underspend under one budget category to cover the costs under a different category, (e.g. any underspend on the budget to cover the travel can be used to cover other costs for subsistence), providing the total budget is not exceeded.

Please note that although the grant contribution will be calculated using flat rate contributions, researchers and their institutions will be asked to keep and submit receipts and invoices to demonstrate their spend until 31 December 2022.

Full checks of supporting documentation will be carried out on a proportion of the grants.

Further monitoring and evaluation will also be carried out, to be specified in the Grant Agreement.

Please also note that the final value of the award will be specified in the Grant Agreement. The British Council and partner funders will not increase the value of an award at a later stage.

Travel: travel costs for the researcher travelling to the country where the visit takes place. This also covers costs for luggage and travel insurance as well as local transport on the day of travel. International (economy return) airfares should be booked as far in advance as possible to minimise costs.

Visas: costs for visas. Information on UK entry regulations for the visiting researcher can be found on the UKVI website: <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>.

Insurance: successful applicants must take out adequate insurance as the British Council cannot take responsibility for any problems which may occur during the visit. Successful applicants accept full responsibility for all aspects of the visit and take out insurance for any risks associated with taking part in travelling abroad, including all unexpected and uncontrollable events. The British Council will not be liable for the consequences of any such risks or any costs incurred.

Subsistence: costs for accommodation and other daily expenses for the visiting researcher such as phone and local transport. Subsistence is calculated using unit costs for each week (1 month is intended as 4 weeks), and is specific to the country of destination.

Consumables: a small amount can be requested to cover consumables. Above this amount, it is expected that the receiving laboratory or department will provide any additional resources.

Equal opportunities and diversity: The British Council is committed to equal opportunities and diversity and will consider, on a case by case basis, requests for support to encourage under-represented groups to engage in Institutional Links activity, so long as sufficient justification is provided.

Successful applicants must make their own travel and accommodation arrangements. The British Council cannot give advice on visas or insurance.

Payment of the grant

The British Council will usually sign the Grant Agreement with the UK institution where the successful applicant is either affiliated or (in the case of partner country researcher) will be hosted. The UK institution then receives the grant payments and disburses the funds to the researcher. There may be exceptions to this in some countries, if in doubt please send your question to natalia.toledo@britishcouncil.org.

Payments will be processed in two instalments:

- **Pre-financing payment:** a 90% pre financing payment will be paid within 30 days of signature of the Grant Agreement.
- **Post-visit payment or recovery of the balance:** 10% payment, or a recovery, on approval by the British Council of the final report submitted by the applicant. If the visit has not taken place, or if the duration is shorter than planned, resulting in a reduction in costs, the final payment may be withheld and if necessary the entire grant, or a proportion of it, recovered.

Successful applicants must submit a final report within 30 days of their visit as a condition of the grant. A final report template will be sent to successful applicants and will include a financial and a narrative part.

As the Newton Fund Researcher Links Travel Grant is calculated using flat rates, in most of the countries, successful applicants will not need to submit detailed receipts for each category of expenditure but only proof that the visit took place, (e.g. boarding cards, proof of insurance, visa, accommodation) and a signed certificate of attendance from the host institution. However, please see Appendix 1 for details on reporting requirements for individual countries.

If there is insufficient evidence in the final report that the visit took place as proposed in the application, then additional information may be requested prior to the final payment, or any underspend of the grant may need to be returned to the British Council.

Underspend

In cases where beneficiaries have spent less than the budget awarded, underspend cannot be used for further research activity unless agreed by the British Council. Requests to utilise underspend should be sent to UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org with a letter of support from the host institution before additional expenditure occurs.

7. Ethics and research governance

It is essential that all legal and professional codes of practice are followed in conducting work supported under this Programme. Applicants must ensure the proposed activity will be carried out to the highest standards of ethics and research integrity. Specifically, applications that involve research on animals, human participants, human tissue or patient/participant data must be accompanied by necessary permission certificates from the relevant local ethical review

committees/authorities in the UK and the partner country, or an undertaking to obtain this permission in advance of the activity commencing.

If the proposed activity includes handling of genetic resources and use of traditional knowledge, selected applicants must also present evidence of compliance with the home country regulations before traveling.

Failure to do so will result in applications being rendered ineligible and any funding already committed through this Programme being rescinded.

Please refer to the Research Councils UK 'Policy and Guidelines on Governance of Good Research Conduct' (<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/grc/>), the InterAcademy 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 at UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org for further guidance.

8. 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.

The British Council encourages applications from people from under-represented groups. Applicants may apply for funding to cover extra costs for such participation, (e.g. childcare costs, costs of support for those with disabilities).

Please include requests for such support in the budget submitted with your application.

Please contact us at UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org for further information on funding, and for more on the British Council's approach, see our Equality Policy at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/equality_policy_1.doc.

9. Submission process

The submission deadline is **16:00 UK time on 13 October 2017**. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered for funding.

The deadline applies to all parts of your application, including upload of fully completed supporting documentation. Any applications which are not submitted in full by the deadline, with all required supporting documents, will be considered ineligible. Appeals against this decision will not be accepted.

Applicants for all calls must submit a completed online application form which includes the upload of supporting information. Applications and supporting information should be written in English. The online form allows applicants to enter information and save it for a later date until final submission. There are strict character limits for each section which cannot be exceeded.

The online form and a Word version can be found on the opportunity webpage:

www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/current-opportunities/regional-travel-grants-newton-latin-america **The online application form is available [here](#).**

(https://britishcouncil-cxobw.formstack.com/forms/application_form_newton_latin_america_biodiversity_tg_july2017).

Applicants from the State of São Paulo, Brazil, must also follow the guidelines at www.fapesp.br/11100

Submissions by email will **not** be accepted. Any problems with the online system should be reported before the application deadline to: **Natalia.Toledo@britishcouncil.org**

In addition to filling in the online form, applicants are required to upload the following documents, by the deadline. Late submission of supporting documents, or submission of documents which do not comply with these requirements, will render the application ineligible. The documents are:

1. **A signed letter of support from the Head of Department (or equivalent) of your current home institution.** This should include:
 - how your institution will help you prepare for the visit
 - arrangements for support during your visit
 - how your institution will support you in sustaining the link
 - confirmation that your home or host institution is willing to sign the grant agreement and be responsible for managing the funds awarded to the successful applicant
 - confirmation that the applicant will return to their home institution in a research capacity for at least six months after the end of the visit.

The letter should be written on headed paper in Word or pdf format, and has to be attached and submitted online together with the application form.

2. **A signed letter of invitation from the Head of Department (or equivalent) of the host institution where the visit will take place.** This should include:
 - information on how the host institution will help the applicant prepare for the visit
 - arrangements for support during the visit (waiving of bench fees, support for finding accommodation and any language training needed, induction to the institution, etc.)
 - support to the research, including how the researcher will be integrated into the research group

The letter should be written on headed paper in Word or pdf format, and has to be attached and submitted online together with the application form.

The statements of support from the two Heads of Department should also include comments on the following questions:

- Why is the research important, especially with respect to the international development impact?
- Why do you want to make contact with this institution?
- How will the link be sustained?

Before the completed application form can be submitted to the system, applicants will be asked to confirm in the online form that they have complied with British Council policies on prevention of fraud, bribery, money laundering and addressed any other financial and reputational risk that may affect a transparent and fair grant award process. See:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/transparency/policies/anti-fraud-and-corruption>

Important: Once you submit your application you will not be able to edit your application in any way and you will not be permitted to create a second application. Please also be advised that the UK Researcher Links Team do not have permission to make changes to your application.

If you experience problems with the online submission system, please contact UK-**Natalia.Toledo@britishcouncil.org** before the submission deadline. If you alert us to technical issues only after the deadline, we may not be able to take them into consideration when assessing the eligibility of your application. Once the online application is submitted, the system will generate a unique application ID number. Applicants should note this number and use it in all communications with the British Council. Applicants who have not received this ID number should contact the British Council at UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org.

10. Selection process

Selection begins with an eligibility check by the British Council against the eligibility criteria given in these Guidelines, including Appendix 1 and the Eligibility Checklist at Appendix 2.

Eligible proposals then undergo independent external quality review on the basis of quality, fit to development needs and country priorities and the overarching Researcher Links objectives.

Eligible applications will be assessed in the UK by one of five Review Panels:

- **Biological and Medical Sciences**
- **Environment, Agriculture and Food Sciences**
- **Engineering and Physical Sciences**
- **Social Sciences**
- **Arts and Humanities.**

Applicants must indicate in their online application form which Review Panel their application should be assessed by, and the subject(s) their research covers. Up to three (3) subject areas can be selected in priority order, but the applicant must indicate only one Review Panel.

Proposals are assessed by two reviewers against the criteria at Appendix 3. The Review Panel then gives each application a final score from 0 to 60 and ranks them. Those receiving a final score from the Panel meeting of less than 30 will be considered not fundable. However, please note that achieving an average score equal to or above the threshold does not mean that the proposal will be funded.

The final selection decision will be made in-country in collaboration with national stakeholders and partner funding organisations. Country-specific priorities and challenge areas will be considered in the final decision, in addition to the general assessment criteria under this Programme. Please see Appendix 1 for more information by country.

Only proposals which have clearly articulated relevance to economic development and social welfare (as defined in section 4) of low- to middle-income countries benefitting low-income and vulnerable populations in these countries will be considered for funding.

Notification of results

Appeals against this decision will not be accepted. **Successful applicants will be notified by the end of December 2017.**

11. 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.

Organisation 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 infogovernance@britishcouncil.org or see our website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/privacy-cookies/data-protection>

Contact details

All general queries or comments about this call should be addressed to natalia.toledo@britishcouncil.org

12. 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 nor any of the applicant's employees, partners, directors, shareholders is 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
- 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.

13. 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).
- The successful applicants will be expected to undertake activities in the UK and in the Newton Fund countries listed in section 2 of the 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.
- The British Council's contractual approach in respect of the grant is set out in the Grant Agreement a copy of which can be downloaded from the attachments to this call: 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.
- 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, you should submit a clarification request to Natalia.Toledo@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.

APPENDIX 1: COUNTRY-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

In addition to the guidance given in the main body of this document, further conditions may apply to individual participating countries. These are specified in the table below. **Please refer to this appendix for more information before developing your proposal.**

Note on country/partner research priorities: Proposals must be within the research challenge areas listed in Section 4. If countries have specified research priorities within these areas they are listed below.

1. Mexico	
National co-funder:	NA
Minimum duration:	4 weeks
Maximum duration:	12 weeks
Additional eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will give preference to Mexican Principal Applicants who belong to the National System of Researchers (SNI I,II, III or candidate) but early career researchers can also participate. All applicants must belong to a RENIECYT Institute to be recipients in order to be eligible for future national grants. 	
2. Colombia	
National co-funder:	COLCIENCIAS
Minimum duration:	4 weeks
Maximum duration:	12 weeks
Additional eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All researchers applying from Colombia must be recognised by COLCIENCIAS as per calls 693 of 2014 or 737 of 2015 Members of research groups with current recognition by Colciencias, linked to legally established entities in the Department of Cundinamarca or Boyacá, whether in alliance with national groups or individually. 	
3. Chile	
National Partner:	CONICYT
Minimum duration:	4 weeks
Maximum duration:	12 weeks
Additional eligibility criteria: <p>Chilean Principal Applicants must be working for any of the following institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public or private not-for-profit higher education institutions (universities, institutes) Public or not-for-profit private research centres Not-for-profit organizations with experience in research 	
4. Peru	

National co-funder:	CONCYTEC
Minimum duration:	4 weeks
Maximum duration:	12 weeks
Additional eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peruvian Principal Applicants must be working for any of the following institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public or private higher education and research institutions (universities, institutes) ○ Public or private not-for-profit research centres ○ Not-for-profit organizations • All institutions, except higher education institutions, should demonstrate their high quality research level through at least two published papers in peer-reviewed research journals. • Peruvian Principal Applicants must provide proof of their registration in REGINA (National Registry of Researchers), or have a scientific publications record that would allow to obtain the minimal score to be registered in REGINA (See the REGINA rules and the REGINA scoring table). • Peruvian Principal Applicants should not have breached previous contracts with Cienciactiva/FONDECYT. • Peruvian Lead Institutions must have at least 3 years of activities on biodiversity issues, and provide proof of holding an active RUC (“activo y habido” according to SUNAT). • The letter of support from the Peruvian Lead Institution must include the nature and duration of the work relationship of the Peruvian Principal Applicant. • If the proposed activity includes handling of genetic resources and use of traditional knowledge, applicants must commit to start the contract application process with the relevant authority within 15 calendar days after being notified as selected, in case it is missing. Applicants will be requested to show evidence of this process to CONCYTEC. 	
5. Brazil	
National co-funder:	FAPESP
Minimum duration:	2 weeks
Maximum duration:	12 weeks
Additional eligibility criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Investigators of ongoing research projects funded by FAPESP within the following FAPESP funding modalities: Regular Research Awards (excluding mobility projects), Thematic Projects, Young Investigator Awards, Research Innovation and Dissemination Centers (CEPIDs/RIDCs), Public Education Research Program, Research in Public Policies and Research Partnership for Technological Innovation (PITE). Co-Principal Investigators of ongoing Thematic Projects, CEPIDs/RIDCs and PITEs are also eligible to apply • Further funding for domestic travel only for Brazilian researchers, based in the State of Sao Paulo, is available from FAPESP. Please, follow the additional guidelines at www.fapesp.br/11100 to seek more information. 	
6. Argentina	
National co-funder:	CONICET / MINCyT
Minimum duration:	4 weeks
Maximum duration:	12 weeks

Additional eligibility criteria:

Researchers based at a public or private university, CONICET Research Centres, National Research Institutes, or Research Facilities of Public Entities.

APPENDIX 2: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA CHECKLIST

Eligibility criteria checklist	
The application has been submitted by the applicant by the published deadline.	
The applicant has enclosed the two (2) supporting letters required.	
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 one (1) application under this call for Travel Grant proposals (August 2017).	
The applicant is an early or established career researcher	
The mobility will take place between 1 March 2018 and 31 August 2018.	
The applicant will return to his/her home institution in a research capacity for at least six months 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 Researcher Links Travel Grant within earlier Calls.	
The home or host institution must have the capacity to administer a grant and satisfy British Council requirements to prevent bribery, fraud and professional misconduct. Applicants will confirm that they comply to British Council requirements by responding to pre-submission questions in the online application form	

APPENDIX 3: SCORING SYSTEM

Assessment of the quality and development relevance of the proposals will be performed by panel members in the UK, and the final funding decisions will be made in discussion with British Council country office and in-country partners, if applicable. Proposals with an average score of less than 30 points are considered not fundable. Equally, only proposals that have clearly articulated relevance to economic development and social welfare of the partner country will be considered for funding

Section 1: Relevance to economic development and social welfare	Score	Range
		YES/NO
<p>The proposal clearly articulates a plausible pathway for the research to lead to positive impact on the lives of people on low income and contribute to the economic development and social welfare of the partner country and within a reasonable timeframe (3–15 years).</p> <p>Please see section 4 of the guidelines for further details.</p>		

Section 2: Research quality and background	Score	Range
		0–20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The academic importance and timeliness of the research topic is clearly demonstrated. • The applicant has sufficient relevant experience to undertake the proposed research visit and achieve the stated objectives. • The collaborating institutions are of appropriate academic standing. 		<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>

Section 3: Research visit and proposal	Score	Range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of the proposed research visit includes clear, feasible and realistic objectives and outputs. There is clear evidence that the proposed research visit supports new links or significantly extends and develops existing links. The benefits and relevance of the collaboration to the UK and partner country institution, and to the research itself, are clearly described. If the applicant is returning to visit the research group where she/he carried out their PhD research or previously taught, there is clear evidence that the proposed research visit will expand added value to the collaboration. There is strong evidence of support from both the home and host institutions. 	<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>	

Section 4: Sustainability and capacity building	Score	Range
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal includes a clear and feasible description of how the individuals and research groups involved intend to sustain their collaboration over the longer term. The potential in terms of professional development and capacity building for the applicant and other potential beneficiaries is clearly described. 	<p>20 points: Meets all criteria to an exceptional level</p> <p>16 to 19 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a very high level</p> <p>11 to 15 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to a high level</p> <p>6 to 10 points: Meets the majority of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>1 to 5 points: Meets some of the criteria to an adequate level</p> <p>0 points: Fails to meet any of the criteria to an adequate level.</p>	
Total score for quality assessment (Section 1 + Section 2 + Section 3)	Score	Range
		0–60

APPENDIX 4: BUDGET

Newton Researcher Links Travel Grants are intended to be a contribution to the travel, subsistence, visa, insurance costs that researchers incur during their visit. Contributions towards these costs have been calculated using flat rates, depending on the country of the proposed visit and the duration of the visit. Please note that the unit costs given below constitute the maximum amounts that can be requested in each category and that all budget requests will be assessed for feasibility and appropriateness. While the maximum contribution cannot be exceeded, applicants can request less, in which case the amount requested cannot be increased at a later stage.

A small amount, see tables below, can be requested for consumables (above this amount, it is expected that the receiving laboratory or department will provide any additional resources). The maximum amounts for each part of the grant, and the maximum total grant that can be requested are shown in the table below, but it is expected that the requested budget reflects the actual costs expected to be incurred.

Additional support based on direct costs can be requested to contribute towards extra childcare costs associated with the visit (up to a maximum of 5% of the subsistence costs requested) and special needs.

Support for special needs should be requested in writing (Natalie.Toledo@britishcouncil.org). Requests will be assessed and agreed on an individual basis.

Subsistence amounts have been calculated referring to EC Programmes and British Council local information.

Please note that the grant must not be used to cover staff costs.

Direction of travel: Partner country to UK and UK to Partner country

Country of departure	Country of destination	Maximum travel costs	Accommodation and subsistence* (per week)	Maximum visa costs	Maximum travel insurance costs per week	Maximum consumables/ bench fees per week	Maximum total cost		
							4 weeks / 1 month visit	8 weeks / 2 month visit	12 weeks / 3 month visit
Mexico	United Kingdom	£1500	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 5,000	£ 8,350	£ 11,700
United Kingdom	Mexico	£1500	£525	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 4,300	£ 6,950	£ 9,700
Country of departure	Country of destination	Maximum travel costs	Accommodation and subsistence* (per week)	Maximum visa costs	Maximum travel insurance costs per week	Maximum consumables/ bench fees per week	4 weeks / 1 month visit	8 weeks / 2 month visit	12 weeks / 3 month visit
Colombia	United Kingdom	£1300	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£4,800	£8,150	£11,500
United Kingdom	Colombia	£1300	£525	£90	£12.50	£125	£4,100	£6,750	£9,400

Country of departure	Country of destination	Maximum travel costs	Accommodation and subsistence* (per week)	Maximum visa costs	Maximum travel insurance costs per week	Maximum consumables/ bench fees per week	4 weeks / 1 month visit	8 weeks / 2 month visit	12 weeks / 3 month visit
Chile	United Kingdom	£1600	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 5,100	£ 8,450	£ 11,800
United Kingdom	Chile	£1600	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 5,100	£ 8,450	£ 11,800
Country of departure	Country of destination	Maximum travel costs	Accommodation and subsistence* (per week)	Maximum visa costs	Maximum travel insurance costs per week	Maximum consumables/ bench fees per week	2 weeks / 0.5 month visit	8 weeks / 2 month visit	12 weeks / 3 month visit
Brazil	United Kingdom	£1500	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 3,325	£ 8,350	£ 11,700
United Kingdom	Brazil	£1500	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 3,325	£ 8,350	£ 11,700
Country of departure	Country of destination	Maximum travel costs	Accommodation and subsistence* (per week)	Maximum visa costs	Maximum travel insurance costs per week	Maximum consumables/ bench fees per week	4 weeks / 1 month visit	8 weeks / 2 month visit	12 weeks / 3 month visit
Peru	United Kingdom	£1500	£700	£150	£12.50	£62.50	£ 5,000	£ 8,350	£ 11,700
United Kingdom	Peru	£1500	£525	£150	£12.50	£62.50	£ 4,300	£ 6,950	£ 9,600
Country of departure	Country of destination	Maximum travel costs	Accommodation and subsistence* (per week)	Maximum visa costs	Maximum travel insurance costs per week	Maximum consumables/ bench fees per week	4 weeks / 1 month visit	8 weeks / 2 month visit	12 weeks / 3 month visit
Argentina	United Kingdom	£1500	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 5,000	£ 8,350	£ 11,700
United Kingdom	Argentina	£1500	£700	£150	£12.50	£125	£ 5,000	£ 8,350	£ 11,700

APPENDIX 5: PRIORITY AREAS IN BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMME (JOINTLY CONSTRUCTED WITH NERC)

The programme will be delivered through four, inter-related themes that set out the considerations required to deliver a better understanding of the regional biodiversity and how it can be effectively managed as the region develops:

1. Understanding habitats and species

Many regions in LATAM are either underexplored for biodiversity, or are suffering significant biodiversity loss. Across the region, biodiversity is still very poorly described compared with that of temperate regions. There are three key knowledge deficiencies: 1) while some taxa are relatively well known (for example tropical plants or birds) these are rarely surveyed in sufficient detail across whole landscapes, which detracts from our ability to understand ecosystem functioning or human impacts at this level; 2) other key biodiversity groups (for example, soil organisms), are not well studied at any level; 3) interactions between organisms, such as those above- and below-ground or across trophic levels, are poorly understood yet are likely play a key role in regulating habitats and biogeochemical cycles.

These three knowledge gaps mean that there is a need to: 1) expand existing sample networks for well-sampled taxa; 2) supplement networks with basic assessments and valuations for poorly studied taxa, including evaluations of their distribution, abundance and community composition, and; 3) field experiments that link biodiversity with their functional roles in intact and human-disturbed systems.

We have a very limited understanding how the species richness and its functional consequences in terms of levels of biodiversity required to provide the ecosystem services we need and how to manage land and resource use to support important biodiversity-ecosystem function relationships in an integrated way.

The objective of this theme is to better understand the relationship between habitats and species and species composition across what is an increasingly anthropogenic region. There is a need specifically to understand the functional role of biodiversity in LATAM ecosystems across a range of ecosystem goods and services, environmental gradients and scales typical of real landscapes.

2. Biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods and bio-economy

There is an urgent need in Latin America to develop a resilient natural resource economy. Social and economic policy linked to environmental pressures will result in land-use changes that will influence biodiversity and ecosystem processes at multiple scales. Moving to a natural resource economy will necessitate radical improvements in the quality and quantity of information on the biodiversity and the ecosystem services the biodiversity sits within. There is a need to link biodiversity to function, and to better understand the different ways in which biodiversity imparts value (for example, through functions, through resilience and through iconic species).

To help deliver a stable economy, data on Latin American biodiversity will provide essential knowledge underpinning sustainable management and our understanding of ecosystem function. In many areas the data required for the next-generation models of ecosystem function and landscape scale management are lacking. There are three major challenges: a) implementation of high throughput monitoring; b) modelling and understanding land-use biodiversity function metrics; c) delivering an integrated tool for decision makers. Each of these involves a large effort, given the scale within the region, and so exemplar approaches may be required.

The objective of this theme is better understand the biodiversity resource available within the region, using new technological and skills capacity, to monitor, model; and provide decision making tools directed towards ensuring the regions bio-economy is biodiversity based and thus sustainable.

3. Maintaining and restoring natural capital

Many pressing biodiversity challenges in Latin America relate to human interactions with biodiversity, either negative (e.g. anthropogenic impacts) or positive (e.g. sustainable economic activities and livelihoods based on biodiversity, development of successful bio-economies, climate-smart agriculture etc.). This requires intensified research efforts into the identification of species, landscapes or ecosystems of potential use: for example the identification of wild species for food, forestry, health or biotechnology. Research in these contexts, integrating community-level perspectives, priorities and knowledge with scientific understanding of biodiversity, requires an interdisciplinary approach.

The challenges of managing biodiversity in situ in Latin America are intricately linked with these issues. Whilst fundamental research into the status of species and ecosystems provides critical guidance for management strategies of, for example protected areas, these approaches are not always successful. Development of a better understanding of the natural capital that biodiversity represents and the ecosystem services it delivers – from multiple perspectives including local populations, and across ‘natural’/human-modified/urban landscapes – and integration of these values into decision-making, will be essential for sustainable management.

Prioritisation and delivery of successful ex situ conservation efforts requires a greater understanding not only of the properties, traits and relative importance of target taxa (e.g. threatened species, useful species, endemic species), but also of the techniques necessary for their long-term maintenance. For example, fundamental information on which seed plant species can be stored through traditional approaches, and which (e.g. recalcitrant species) require development of specialised approaches such as cryopreservation, is still lacking for large proportions of the Latin American flora.

The objective of this theme is better understand presence and in-situ value of the biodiversity resource within the region, through the use of a range of natural capital approaches (and beyond economic valuation only). In doing so, and in association with the other themes this will inform on the most suitable approaches for maintaining the biodiversity.

4. Global Climate Change, Biodiversity and ecosystems

Whilst regions within LATA are hotspots of terrestrial biodiversity, the loss, fragmentation and degradation of the habitats across the region are drivers of global biodiversity loss and have important implications for the global climate system. For example, the loss of tropical forests has important implications for the global climate system, as well as a range of other ecosystem services. Deforestation is second only to the combustion of fossil fuels for energy generation as a source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The objective of this theme is to place the better understanding of LATAM biodiversity, its range, functioning and management, within a global and climate impact context.

Delivery of programme

Integrating ground data with emerging technologies

New technological capacity is enabling rapid improvement in quality and quantity of information on biodiversity and ecosystems at regional, national, and international scales. This is mirrored by enhanced data visualisation and predictive capability of modelling approaches. Changes are occurring at both ends of the biodiversity analysis spectrum: advances in genetic metabarcoding have enabled a rapid assessment of biodiversity at highly resolved spatial and taxonomic scales; earth observation (EO) sensors, e.g. European Copernicus satellites, deliver unprecedentedly high-resolution spatial and temporal observations of biophysical parameters.

Of equal importance is the capability in ground-based data collection on Latin American biodiversity, which provides essential knowledge underpinning conservation and understanding of ecosystem function. These data provide a fundamental complement to, and verification of, remotely sensed and genetic information. Whilst technological advances in earth observation and modelling offer huge potential for multi-scale survey, prediction and monitoring of biodiversity in Latin America, the value of the information they deliver will depend on the quality and quantity of the ground data supporting them. Knowing what species are is vital for next-generation models of ecosystem function; and whilst remote sensing is suitable for landscape scales, it cannot name individual species. In particular, it is clear that rare species – often taxonomically neglected and hard to name – may play disproportionate roles as environments change.

In many parts of the region such ground-based data are still lacking. There remains a pressing need to fill knowledge gaps, which can only be achieved through targeted, fundamental ground-based biodiversity studies. The roles of approaches such as species inventory and checklists, collections, taxonomic identification, ecological studies and establishment of permanent monitoring plots, therefore remain vitally important in this context. The challenge here is to ensure that field data are collected in standardised, compatible formats, and based on accurate identifications aligned to standardised taxonomic frameworks, such that data can not only be connected and shared effectively at regional scale, for example in the context of evaluating the impacts of climatic change on ecosystem function and species distribution, but also integrated systematically into emerging techniques for biodiversity analysis and monitoring.

Barcoding and metabarcoding techniques offer potential for rapid generation of high-resolution ground data, and their use will often depend on connecting individual sequences to named organisms. However, the underlying taxonomic/genetic data set does not currently exist for

many regions. The true value of both data sets will rely on their integration and a strategic, coordinated approach is required for achieving this at regional scale.

Advances in EO (such as the increasing range of biophysical parameters for example from the ESA Climate Change Initiative (CCI) and the Essential Biodiversity Variables (EBV) programme), genomics, and modelling and computation, can be used to analyse high-resolution spatial datasets of biodiversity and ecosystem services and their spatial patterns and temporal changes. Ensuring the value of analysis at these scales requires the presence of ground based (taxonomic/ecological) data; together they may enable a more objective and spatially relevant assessment of changes in land management and ecosystem resilience.

Regional approaches to research and management of biodiversity are therefore hampered by the lack of consistent data frameworks and their interoperability. For example, there is a lack of standardised vegetation classifications, which differ widely across Latin America, especially where biomes and ecosystems are shared across national borders. Better agreed definitions of biomes and ecosystems would allow generation of checklists for major formations such as rain forests, savannas and dry forests, which do not currently exist, and would facilitate regional analysis and cooperation.