

# **Newton-Bhabha PhD Placements Programme**

## **Call Guidelines**



## 1. Background

The Newton Fund is a £735 million fund (approximately £150 million a year for 7 years starting 2014/15) supported by the UK and Indian governments through a ministerial agreement was launched to promote science and innovation partnerships between the UK and key international partners, including India. Programmes under the Newton Fund will augment the existing research collaboration with India to jointly deliver innovative solutions to global development challenges.

Building up a talented pool of well trained, internationally active doctoral scholars is an essential step towards establishing world-class research systems. Improving mobility at the doctoral level is also an important factor in facilitating cross border research collaboration, as connections made at this level can be sustained over longer periods and can percolate through to other members of research teams.

Therefore, the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills of the British Government (BIS) and Department of Science and Technology and Department of Biotechnology of the Ministry of Science and Technology, India (MoST) have decided to jointly establish a PhD Placement Programme (*hereafter referred to as "the Programme"*) under the Newton-Bhabha Fund.

## 2. Relevance to economic development and social welfare

The Newton 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 their 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 funding.

### 3. . Programme Overview

The programme aims to develop individual capacity of scholars through PhD placements.

The programme is jointly funded by the British Council India, Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and offers short-term (2-4 months) PhD placements for Indian and UK PhD scholars to spend a period of their study at UK or Indian higher education or research institutions.

DST will support 20 students each from India and UK in STEM. DBT will support 20 students each from India and UK in Life Sciences. The funding to the selected scholars will be disbursed by March 2017 and placements can take place between April and December 2017.

The PhD placements will be focussed on research areas which have been identified at the country level as important for fulfilling the Fund goals. (Please refer to the section on 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.

### 4. Outcomes

The primary outcomes will be the following:

- Development of individual capacity through international training and development opportunities

- 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;
- Participation of UK-based and Indian PhD scholars in international intellectual networks, building cultural understanding, and fostering long-term sustainable research collaborations
- Awareness of the research strength of the UK and India
- Opportunity for PhD supervisors to explore possibilities for future collaborations.

## 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 – This includes Life sciences, Biotechnology, Botany, Zoology, Micro biology, Bio chemistry, Medicine , Pharma and Veterinary Sciences
- Engineering and Physical sciences – This includes Physics, Chemistry, Engineering, Physical Mathematics, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences
- Environment Food and Agriculture sciences
- Public health and well being

## 6. Application process for PhD Scholars

**6.a Eligibility Criteria:** Applications are welcome from PhD scholars from India and UK in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Life Sciences.

**On the UK side:** The scheme is open only for UK scholars pursuing their PhD at a UK home institution. Applications will be considered from scholars from all institutions which are strong in research in the priority sectors (please refer to the above section).

**On the Indian Side:** The scheme is open only for Indian scholars enrolled at Indian higher education institution with following criteria:

1. INSPIRE PhD Senior Research Fellows (SRFs) of Batch 2013 are eligible to apply for a STEM subject.
2. PhD Scholar 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, INSPIRE, ICMR-NET, ICAR-NET. Please upload certificate of succeeding the national level test as a supporting document.

**The applications should be with reference to the mentioned priority areas.**

**For both Indian and UK scholars** - The scholar should have a valid passport before applying for the funding. The scholar would be required to submit their PhD thesis only after completion of the Newton Bhabha PhD placement.

Please ensure that you also meet eligibility criteria mentioned in Annexure 1

## **6.b Application Process**

Each application should come with endorsement letters from both the sending and receiving supervisors. The host supervisor's letter must confirm that they will host the PhD scholar and give them all necessary 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 if any bench fees will be charged. If in case UK University charges any registration or other fees, it should be disclosed to an applicant in advance.

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

**Indian applicants** should submit the form online at the following link:

[https://britishcouncil-cxobw.formstack.com/forms/application\\_form\\_phd\\_placements\\_indiatouk\\_2016](https://britishcouncil-cxobw.formstack.com/forms/application_form_phd_placements_indiatouk_2016)  
and upload the supporting Documents.

**UK applicants** should submit the form online at the following link

[https://britishcouncil-cxobw.formstack.com/forms/application\\_form\\_phd\\_placements\\_uktoindia\\_2016](https://britishcouncil-cxobw.formstack.com/forms/application_form_phd_placements_uktoindia_2016)

and upload the supporting documents.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 16<sup>th</sup> August 2016. The announcement of the selection results will be made by 8<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

**N.B: Candidates applying in Life Sciences from India should submit a copy of uploaded form with supporting documents to DBT as detailed in contact points at S. No. 10**

### 6.c Funding Arrangements for UK scholars

- **British Council** will cover the following items as part of Newton Bhabha Fund
  - UK scholars' travel - International return airfare (economy class), visa fees to India and travel Insurance (if required) – **Maximum up to £900 all inclusive**
- **DST or DBT** (as relevant per subject area) will cover the following items as part of Newton Bhabha Fund:
  - 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 and accommodation charges @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 anywhere outside before departing to India for their convenience. DST or DBT will release their House Rent allowances @10, 20 and 30% of stipend amount as per Government of India norms not more than that.
  - 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.

### 6.d Funding arrangements for Indian Scholars

- **British Council** will cover the following items as part of Newton Bhabha Fund
  - Indian scholars' bench fees in the UK – Maximum £5,000, Where the UK host university cannot waive the bench fees (or consumables costs). The host supervisor can apply to the British Council for up to £5,000, which must be included in the Indian applicant's application and should be stated in the endorsement letter.

- 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 as part of Newton Bhabha Fund:
  - Indian scholars' visa fees
  - Indian scholars' international return airfares (economy class) as per GOI norms
  - Indian scholars' travel insurance as per GOI norms

### 6.e Evaluation Criteria

The scholars should ensure their applications meet the criteria set out below. The principles underlying the assessment of applications will be:

- All questions on the Application Form are answered;
- The activities are planned to deliver the outcomes in the most effective way;
- 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.

### 6.f Evaluation Process

British Council, Department of Science and Technology (DST), and Department of Biotechnology(DBT), India will conduct the first level of assessment independently and based on that will shortlist the number of scholars. Later the 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.

## 7. Contracting and Financial Arrangements

### 7.a For UK PhD Scholars

**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.

British Council will disburse the grant to UK home institution after receiving 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 scholar's 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

### 7.b For Indian PhD Scholars

**British Council** will sign a grant agreement with UK host Institution to disburse Indian scholar's stipend and bench fees (if any). The Grant will only be released once British Council receives signed grant agreement from 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** (as relevant per subject area) will release the funds for Indian PhD scholars to their respective Indian Home Institutions. 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).



**7.c Grant disbursement for both Indian and UK Scholars** - 90% of the total grant will be disbursed to the home and host institution before the placement begins. The remaining 10% of the grant will be disbursed after completing the placement and submitting the financial and narrative reports to both British Council and DST or DBT. (as relevant per subject area) 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.

## 8. Support to PhD scholars

The Newton-Bhabha PhD Placements programme expects that the host institution offers high standards of supervision, management and mentoring to placement scholars. In your proposal, you might want to consider the following:

- The host institution's standards of supervision, management and mentoring
- Experience of the supervisors to train and mentor doctoral scholars so that they 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 [List of Indian institutes](#) ranked by Ministry of

Human Resource Development, India to identify suitable Indian institute in their area of research for placement. However this source does not limit you to explore any other relevant institutions. For further support in identifying Indian institute for aforementioned priority sectors, please contact Purti Kohli at [purti.kohli@britishcouncil.org](mailto:purti.kohli@britishcouncil.org)

- Indian scholars may visit [Postgraduate support service](#) page provided by International Unit, UK to identify UK institutions.

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

## 9. Reporting and Monitoring

1. Selected scholars will be asked to complete an online baseline survey before the placement begins and baseline follow up survey after 6 months of the placement.
2. Beneficiary and host institution would have to submit the financial and narrative report to the British Council India and DST/DBT respectively within 30 days of completion of their placement. Details will be shared with the selected scholars.
3. If the PhD scholar is quitting or is unable to complete the period of the placement, they must immediately report to British Council, DBT or DST as relevant explaining their decision, and submitting a letter showing the agreement of their supervisor.
4. If in case scholar is unable to complete full tenure of the placement at host institute, his / her 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	5 <sup>th</sup> July 2016
Call Close	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2016
Notification to selected scholars	8th November 2016
Placements to be undertaken	April to December 2017
Report submission	Within 30 days of the completion of the placement

**10. Contact Points****For British Council – India**

Purti Kohli

Email ID - [newton@in.britishcouncil.org](mailto:newton@in.britishcouncil.org) or [purti.kohli@britishcouncil.org](mailto:purti.kohli@britishcouncil.org)

**For DST – India**

Dr S Mallikarjun Babu

Email ID - [sm.babu@nic.in](mailto:sm.babu@nic.in)

**For DBT – India**

Dr. Sanjay Kalia  
Room No. 814 Block 2, 8<sup>th</sup> Floors,  
Department of Biotechnology  
CGO Complex, Lodi Road,  
New Delhi – 110 003

Email ID – [sanjay.kalia@nic.in](mailto:sanjay.kalia@nic.in)

## Annexure 1 – Eligibility Criteria checklist

The scholar should be an Indian or UK national	
If you are applying for Life Sciences, then you should be in second or third year of your PhD at an Indian institution	
If you are applying for STEM subjects then you should be an INSPIRE PhD Senior Research Fellow of batch 2013	
The UK scholar is undertaking a PhD at UK institution	
The application has been submitted by the applicant by 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 between April to December 2017	
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 Fund PhD placement grant in previous rounds	