

Due Diligence Requirements for International Collaboration

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1 Background

Where a research proposal involves payments to international organisations we are required to conduct a documented financial assurance and risk assessment. This review is a mandatory requirement of GCRF funding and the confirmation of its undertaking is increasingly becoming part of the application process.

The process is applicable for all organisations who will be receiving money directly from the University of Birmingham, or through a subcontract(s) from an international organisation who have been directly funded by the University of Birmingham (UoB).

The process must be conducted for all organisations that will be in receipt of funding that initiated from the University of Birmingham. Organisations include, but are not limited to, universities, other research institutions, government bodies and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). It is not possible to contract directly with an individual person

2 Due Diligence Process

2.1 Application Stage

At application stage each international partner is required to provide essential contact information and details on their organisational structure. This is included in Section 1 of the Application Form. This section collates basic institutional details of the organisation involved and its key staff members. The same information will be appropriate to pass to the contracts team in the event the award is successful.

Internal checks to be conducted by the Disability Under Siege Team proposed partner organisations will be conducted as follows:

- Carry out an online search on the organisation, both their official web site and for any news stories. This should provide an indication of the activities at the organisation and any good or bad news stories. It will also reveal details of any other projects the organisation has been involved in and therefore indicate whether they have the capacity to carry out the required research.



- Check the corruption index for the country the organisation is based in. This can be found at https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016 and provides a useful indication of the level of corruption within the country concerned and therefore may increase the levels of risk regarding funding going to organisations within these countries.
- If concerns are identified establish if the organisation has previously been engaged with across the University and what interactions took place. This may raise red flags at an early stage or identify how risks were previously mitigated.
- Check with UoB Finance Department regarding the making of payments to the partner organisation country to ascertain whether there are any known complexities in making payments.

If the above checks result in any major concerns, the project team will contact the applicant to discuss appropriate courses of action.

2.2 Potential Document Checklist

The following documents could be requested from the organisation (alternatively please provide a link to a website where the document(s) are held) to support with the completion of the due diligence process. **Please note:** all documentation **MUST** be in English.

1. Evidence of Legal Status
2. Scientific Misconduct Policy
3. Ethics Policy
4. Risk Management Policy
5. Anti-Bribery Policy
6. Financial Fraud Policy
7. Financial Procedures Policy
8. Procurement Policy
9. Last 3 years Financial Accounts
10. Example of Timesheet
11. Travel and Subsistence Policy

3 Post-Award Stage

Post Award Due Diligence checks will be led by the Disability Under Siege Project Team. Partners are expected to adhere to standard invoice / payment terms of quarterly in arrears.

Where it is believed, or known, that partners will need to be paid in advance of work being undertaken the Project Team will work with the partner to generate a proposed payment schedule. Consideration will be given to the timing of the payments and the quantum of funding versus the proposed level of activity in that period.

The due diligence process should be repeated on a revolving basis e.g. every three years or sooner if there are any known issues or material changes with either the overseas research organisation or the country in which it is based.



All decisions / mitigation will be documented in writing and include details of the matter identified, reason for concern and remedy implemented.

The above process should be repeated where additional partners or subcontract are engaged during the life of the project.