Network and Knowledge Exchange Funding Call Description

Last updated: 3rd February 2022

The Disability Under Siege Network is making funds available to support impactful projects, network-building and activities to enhance sustainable and scalable local and regional capacity from an interdisciplinary perspective for those with disabilities in formal and non-formal educational settings.

This call seeks to support knowledge exchange and partnership building projects, especially between new partners in order to develop innovative approaches, as well as to consolidate and develop sustainable partnerships. The aim is to create opportunities for learning and co-production of new knowledge and sustainable practices for education for those with disabilities, with a focus on Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.

Up to £30,000 will be available for 5-8 projects, up to 12 months in duration, to individuals, disability groups, practitioners, researchers, higher education institutions, NGOs and international organisations whose key intended beneficiaries are persons with disabilities and their families in Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.

Online Information Event: 8th February 2022, 10am-11am (UK Time)
Call Opening Date: 11th February 2022
Call Closing Date: 25th March 2022

For more information, please visit www.disabilityundersiege.org

1   Background

Disability Under Siege is a Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) Network Plus programme, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), UK. It is a co-created programme bringing together a community of researchers, educational practitioners, cultural institutions, advocacy organisations and disability led groups in the UK and Middle East. The Network aims to contribute to research efforts by providing intellectual and logistical resources that local practitioners need to transform education provision for children with disabilities in conflict-affected countries.

The Disability Under Siege Network has the following aims:

1. Re-shape public understanding of disability in contexts of conflict and crisis;
2. Support research and evidence building to change public policies and practices regarding disability inclusion in education;
3. Enhance local, regional and international capacity to address issues of access, quality and participation in education for those with disabilities in formal and non-formal educational settings;
4. Foster and support cultural events as a means to further research and evidence building to highlight priorities around disability inclusion in education
5. Legacy-building through the coordination and integration of outputs from the programme and scaling/transferring findings to other relevant global contexts.

Our research partners include Birzeit University (Palestine), Birmingham City University (UK), Islamic University of Gaza (Palestine), and the Centre for Lebanese Studies at the Lebanese American University (Lebanon), which bring complementary expertise in the fields of education under occupation, inclusion, public health and social action, arts and culture, disability and social justice.

2   Call Description

In support of our stated aims, the Disability Under Siege Network is making funds available to support impactful projects, network-building and activities to enhance sustainable and scalable local and regional capacity in education for those with disabilities in formal and non-formal educational settings.

2.1   Call Focus

The call focus is centred on knowledge exchange and partnership building projects, especially between new partners in order to develop innovative approaches, as well as to consolidate and develop sustainable partnerships. The aim is to create opportunities for learning and co-production of new knowledge and sustainable practices for education for those with disabilities, with a focus on Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.

2.2   Project Themes

➢ **Building local and regional networks** between educational institutions, disability-led and cultural organisations
➢ **Supporting early career researchers and practitioners** in the field of disability

2.3   Questions

How can new collaborative local / regional / global partnerships contribute to shaping public and professional understandings of disability?

How can local / regional / global partnerships with arts and cultural organisations represent and shape public discourse and understanding of disability?

How can evidence be sustainably collected to inform policy and practice to improve educational outcomes for children and young people with disabilities, and contribute to the SDG agenda (relating to education, reduced inequalities and partnerships for goals)?

2.4   What Type of activities will the fund cover?
(1) Knowledge exchange events such as conferences, workshops and seminars.
(2) Partnership building projects and collaborations that support the development of sustainable networks and engagement that develop public understanding of disability in contexts of conflict and crisis.
(3) Collaborations between cultural and disability-led organisations as a means to generate inclusive, community-based projects and opportunities for the co-design of events (including exhibitions and narrative projects; film, video and performances).
(4) Training and capacity-building projects for civil society groups and government officials which may include demonstration projects for scalability, transferability, or effectiveness of social protection-based conflict prevention measures.

2.5   What outputs and outcomes are expected?
Outcomes can be three-fold:
i)   Contribution to knowledge on disability
ii)   Capacity building
iii)   Cultural impact

Examples of these could include:
-   Co-produced agendas for impact in the longer-term.
-   Mentoring networks for early career researchers or practitioners in the field of disability.
-   Capacity-building within LMIC organisations.
-   Equitable partnerships between LMICs and UK, and within the local and regional context, eg. school-community partnerships.
-   Promotion of interdisciplinary research methods for research-informed policy on art and disability.

Outputs can include a wide range of materials from pilot research; legal briefings; policy briefings; development of training courses or MOOCs (e.g. research training in qualitative and quantitative analysis, teacher professional development); pedagogical innovations in formal and non-formal educational settings; establishing working groups at school, community, local or regional levels; public engagement though media, social media, visual arts, short films, photo competitions; literary events, small-scale exhibition.

2.6 What funds are available?

Up to a maximum of £30,000, from an overall funding pool of £150,000 will be available to grant holders for projects up to 12 months in duration.

3   Application Process

3.1   How to apply

To apply, please complete and submit the following to disabilityundersiege@contacts.bham.ac.uk:
1. Application Form
2. Due Diligence Checklist

3.2   Timeline for applications
1. Information Event – 8th February
2. Applications Open – 11th February
3. Applications Close – 25th March
4. Applicants notified of outcome by the end of April 2022
5. Due Diligence and Ethics Review for successful applicants will occur immediately after notification
6. Project launch will occur upon finalisation of due diligence and contracts being signed

3.3   How will the application be assessed?

When you have submitted your application, the Disability Under Siege administrative team will check the application to ensure it meets the stated criteria (e.g., in respect to eligibility, allowable costs, supporting documents and word limits). The application will then be reviewed by a Commissioning Selection Panel. Before the panel meeting, the panel members will assess the application against the criteria detailed in the table below.

Panel members will assess the application independently of each other and give the application a score between 1 and 6, where 1 is 'unfundable' and 6 is 'outstanding' on the assessment criteria outlined below. The Assessment Panel will then meet to discuss and agree on the final grade, and to rank applications in order of funding priority and will decide how many projects to fund.

Assessment Criteria	Description
Assessment Criteria 1	Originality: Potential contribution to knowledge
Assessment Criteria 2	Strategic aims and methods
Assessment Criteria 3	Value for Money
Assessment Criteria 4	Innovative collaborations / networking
Assessment Criteria 5	Outputs, Dissemination and Impact

For further information on the assessment process please see the Assessment Criteria Document:

4   Eligibility Criteria

4.1   Who can apply?

This commissioning call is open to all individuals, disability groups, practitioners, researchers, higher education institutions, International Organisations etc. whose key intended beneficiaries are persons with disabilities and their families in Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.

Our funding forms part of the UK's foreign aid budget. Our grants therefore have special requirements in regard to involvement of Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs) on the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) List of Official Development Assistance Recipients.

Lead Organisations are normally expected to be legally registered within their home countries. Exceptions may be possible, so please contact disabilityundersiege@contacts.bham.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity if your organisation is not legally registered. Potential issues include the ability to conclude legally binding contracts and receiving payments.

- All projects must be led from the UK, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine.
- Projects should have a focus on Jordan, Lebanon or Palestine and comply with ODA funding guidelines.
- The project team will be composed of a Principal Investigator (responsible for the leadership of the project) and up to three Co-Investigators. These investigators should include at least one researcher from Jordan, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine.
- All projects must adhere to the aims and expected outcomes of the Disability Under siege Network.
- Applications can be from Academic, Research and Non-Academic organisations.
- Applications that are led by non-Academic organisations (i.e., NGOs, government agency, local community organisation) are eligible.
- Applicants may act as Co-I on multiple applications. However, they may only be PI/lead applicant on one application.
- Applicants must be willing to undergo a 'Due Diligence process' and Ethics and Safeguarding review process with the University of Birmingham (see Guidance Notes for additional details)
- Partnerships and Networking Projects must have a maximum budget of £30,000.

5   Budget Development

5.1   What costs can be covered?

Funding may be used for any research related activity and to communicate the findings of research. This could include, but is not limited to:

- Funding to cover the time that individuals commit to the project including Staff time/administration costs/expert consultancy
- Travel, subsistence and consumables related to the research/project activity and its direct participants

- For events or performance-related activities eg venue hire, refreshments, printing, translation and interpretation costs
- Visual and performative artistic tools needed for collaboration in the funded project (i.e., materials for art related projects
- Fieldwork, focus groups, interview-based research and surveys
- Data and digital technology costs
- Workshop or training fees
- Indirect costs (overheads) associated with the project (not to exceed 20% of total award).
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5.2   What costs cannot be covered?

- Capital or infrastructure expenditure (e.g., basic office/ laboratory / accommodation furniture or equipment, building/ site construction, maintenance or refurbishment work, improvements to digital connective infrastructure, etc.)
- Where possible accessible venues and facilities should be selected; please note that infrastructure costs cannot be requested for example to make structural alterations to venues for improved accessibility
- Fees for undergraduate or postgraduate courses
- Activities that show no clear connection to the applicant's original proposal
- Applications made on behalf of applicants without the applicants' agreement
- Costs for activities that do not adhere to ODA Compliance (see below)
- Any application where equipment forms over 25% of the total budget or £10,000 (whichever is lower) of their budget and/or where this is more cost effective than other options such as hiring equipment.

5.3   Overseas Development Assistance Funding Guidelines

Organisations in countries on the OECD DAC List of ODA Recipients (except China, India, or countries due to graduate from the list) will receive funding to cover the full costs of the project (100%). Organisations in the UK will receive funding in accordance with standard procedures for UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) grants, in other words 80% of full economic cost, with the recipient organisation required to cover the balance.

6   Due Diligence

All successful applicants must undergo due diligence checks in order to be awarded the funding and starting their activities. Full details on the due diligence process are provided in the supporting resources on the website page here.

Due diligence is conducted by the finance team at the University of Birmingham, and is required by the funder, as a risk mitigation strategy. The due diligence process consists of a questionnaire that will cover financial, ethical and policy checks at the lead institution. All new partners must complete this process.

7   Support

7.1   Where can I get support with my application?

The Disability under Siege Network will help to facilitate your application. Whilst we cannot make comments on the academic content of your submission, we can offer assistance about the practical elements such as budgets, formatting, Arabic translation and helping to form a project team. If you have any questions when completing your application, please email disabilityundersiege@contacts.bham.ac.uk where we can assist you.

In addition, the Disability Under Siege team will be hosting sessions for prospective grant holders to support with application development. The following topics will be covered:

- Application Development and Writing
- Ethics and Safeguarding
- Budget preparation and Q&A

All our documents and further information about the Disability under Siege Network can be found on the Disability Under Siege website.