

Call for bids in Kazakhstan: e-learning courses

The British Embassy in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan is now accepting project proposals for the 2020/2021 financial year that will end on 31 March 2021.

This year the British Embassy in Nur-Sultan is seeking to support projects that aim to institutionalise training on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the health sector, and strengthen health response to GBV in Kazakhstan.

There has been an increase in the number of victims of gender-based violence throughout the COVID-19 lockdown in Kazakhstan. One of hotlines, established to help victims of domestic violence, reported a 50% increase in the number of calls in the first half of April compared to February. 50% of girls are subjected to violent methods of upbringing in the family; including 21% who receive physical punishment and 45% experience psychological aggression and violence.

The British Embassy in Nur-Sultan is seeking to support the Government of Kazakhstan in its COVID-19 response plans, including actions on enhancing the GBV response mechanism, and working closely with the Ministry of Healthcare.

We are particularly interested in project proposals aimed towards developing E-learning courses that can deliver the following outcomes:

1. increased proficiency of health professionals in complying with the Clinical Protocol on Gender-Based Violence
2. strengthened capacity and expertise of health professionals in following suitable systems to refer GBV survivors within the health system and providing emergency and social care
3. increased awareness of GBV, amongst first responders including ambulance staff, nurses, doctors, police officers, psychologists and social workers
4. increased awareness of GBV amongst the general public, i.e. for people to understand the concept and develop a zero tolerance attitude toward the issue and abusers; for women to know their rights and be aware of the mechanisms available for them to be treated and protected in case they are GBV survivors

Characteristics

- the E-Learning courses should be comprehensive, self-standing and accessible in various free platforms including those of the British Government
- the courses to be available in Kazakh and Russian languages

Audience

The target audience are first responders to emergency calls, including ambulance staff, nurses, doctors, social workers, psychologists and those

that may identify cases, e.g. teachers

Bid guidance

- project will be funded in the 2020/2021 financial year that will end on 31 March 2021, with no expectation of continued funding beyond this period
- maximum budget limit: USD 38,000

Assessment

Bids will be assessed against the following criteria:

- alignment with the above mentioned thematic priorities and outcomes
- outcomes are achievable within the funding period
- project design includes clear monitoring and evaluation procedures
- sustainability demonstrating that project benefits continue after the funding ends
- risk and financial accountability procedures
- the organisation's safeguarding policies that ensure protection of beneficiaries
- overall value for money

Process

1. project proposals must be received by midnight on 17 July 2020. Late proposals will not be considered
2. proposals must be submitted using the attached forms only (Project Proposal and Activity Based Budget)
3. proposals must be submitted to ukinkz@fco.gov.uk
4. project proposals selected for further consideration will be notified on 31 July 2020
5. the British Embassy Nur-Sultan aim to sign grant agreements with successful project implementers by 14 August 2020

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Documents

[Activity Based Budget Template](#) (MS Excel Spreadsheet, 29.9KB)

[Project Proposal Form above £10k](#) (MS Word Document, 87.5KB)

Coronavirus recovery in Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service

It comes as Her Majesty's Court and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) publishes a recovery plan that charts the progress made during the emergency and sets out the road to recovery.

In March, [almost half of all courts](#) were closed and [jury trials were paused](#) to minimise social interaction between court users. Since then, court staff, legal professionals, and the judiciary have collaborated to prioritise cases and keep the justice system running throughout the lockdown.

Up to [90% of hearings](#) in this period involved remote access. Video technology has been bolstered across all courts, and – using public health advice – measures have been put in place to safely [resume jury trials](#) in [26 courts](#) since June.

This has meant that, throughout the lockdown, domestic abuse victims could obtain protection orders, children could be safeguarded, and dangerous suspects have not been released from jail as their remand expired.

The success of these measures means we can begin to ramp up the work of the courts – building on what we have achieved. The recovery plan, [published today](#), sets out our approach to get back up to speed.

The Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland QC MP, said:

The Prime Minister was right when he said that the whole country needs to prepare for an extended period of managing the threat of the virus and this demands a new perspective on the way we deliver justice.

His spending commitment yesterday shows just how serious we are taking this as a government. We have set aside £142 million to improve more than 100 courts across the country, give 750 more court rooms remote capability.

This will more than double the maintenance budget meaning that, combined with the £48 million already set aside this year, it will be the biggest single investment in the courts and tribunals estate in over a decade.

This will create jobs, increase capacity, and improve the court estate – building on the developments we have made throughout the pandemic to deliver a more efficient and effective court service.

Our courts have been recognised globally for their response to this unprecedented crisis, and those who have worked so hard to deliver this should take pride in how far we have come in a short amount of

time.

We should be proud of this but there is work to be done to get back on track. While the number of outstanding cases is not extraordinary, the context and the rate of increase is. Beyond this week's investment, I am looking at several options to ensure that our courts can continue to run.

I have already identified 10 additional sites for so-called Nightingale courts to allow for better social distancing; we are looking at whether courts will need to stay open for longer to increase the number of cases that can be heard safely on any given day; the standard of video technology continues to improve, with new tech being rolled out across all courts from this week; and I am exploring means of getting jury trials moving at pace once more.

We will of course continue to deliver our manifesto commitments – to keep the country safe from terrorism and to support all victims of crime. But I think it is important to recognise that we are at a crossroads here too.

Coronavirus will continue to have short-term implications and parts of the justice system will operate differently for some time but, in many ways, the world will never be the same.

Our challenge now must be to learn lessons from our response and address the immediate implications, while at the same time seizing any opportunities that may exist in a reality that looks very different than it did just a few months ago.

It is possible to make this recovery a renewal for justice in our country. Getting it right could mean a system that not only emerges intact from this crisis, but is fundamentally more efficient, more dynamic and more resilient – a smarter system for a different future, which is good news for all who use our courts.

[New video tech to increase remote hearings in civil and family courts](#)

- The Cloud Video Platform is being extended to civil and family courts
- Over 120 courts set to have more reliable video tech that improves remote court hearings
- Roll out is part of HMCTS recovery plan to ensure justice continues to be served

It follows the successful implementation of the Cloud Video Platform (CVP) across 60 crown courts and 93 magistrates' courts. The technology has been used in some 3,600 crown court hearings and more than 7,000 overnight remand cases heard by magistrates.

CVP can be accessed by any device that has a camera and a microphone – such as a mobile phone or tablet. Anyone can join easily, and securely, through a web browser, and sessions can be locked to make sure only appropriate parties join. Training rooms can also be set up so that sessions may be rehearsed before they go live.

Extending it to civil and family proceedings means that all courts in England and Wales will have the technology needed to hold remote hearings – giving users a safer, reliable, and more accessible service, while ensuring justice continues to be delivered.

Courts Minister, Chris Philp, said:

We have worked closely with the judiciary to continue thousands of hearings during the pandemic.

This new system will bolster our efforts to prioritise urgent cases and increase our capacity to hear them remotely – ensuring justice is delivered effectively and safely.

Today's (1 July 2020) announcement forms part of the wider [HMCTS recovery plan](#), which sets out how courts will tackle the expected increase in outstanding cases following the pandemic in a safe way. Plans include:

- Increasing capacity by identifying several new 'Nightingale' court sites to increase capacity
- Assessing whether there is a need to extend operating hours
- Determining how best to hold jury trials in a socially distanced way

Thanks to dedicated HMCTS staff and the judiciary, the number of criminal, civil and family cases involving remote technology has increased by 90% since the pandemic began. This has meant that domestic abuse victims could continue to obtain protection orders, children could be safeguarded, and dangerous suspects would not be released from jail as their remand expired.

The CVP roll out will ensure that these vital cases continue to be heard safely and securely. The extension to county courts will take place over the next few months to cover every civil and family court site.

CVP is being rolled out to further Crown and Magistrates' courts this month, and it's scheduled to be available in all our criminal courtrooms by the end of July.

Notes to editors

Foreign Secretary Statement on National Security Legislation in Hong Kong

With permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a statement regarding the latest developments on Hong Kong.

As I feared when I addressed the House on 2 June, yesterday the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in Beijing adopted a wide-ranging national security law for Hong Kong.

This is a grave and deeply disturbing step.

We have carefully assessed the legislation.

In particular, we've considered its impact on the rights, freedoms and critically high degree of autonomy bestowed on Hong Kong under China's Basic Law for Hong Kong as well as under the Joint Declaration, which as the House well knows, the treaty agreed between China and the UK in 1984.

So, Mr Speaker, today, I have the depressing but necessary duty to report to the House that the enactment of this legislation, imposed by the authorities in Beijing on the people of Hong Kong, constitutes a clear and serious breach of the Joint Declaration.

Let me explain to the House the grounds for this sobering conclusion.

First, Mr. Speaker, the legislation violates the high degree of autonomy of executive and legislative powers and independent judicial authority, provided for in paragraph 3 of the Joint Declaration.

The imposition of this legislation by the government in Beijing, rather than it being left to Hong Kong's own institutions, is also, it should be noted, in direct conflict with Article 23 of China's own Basic Law for Hong Kong which affirms that Hong Kong should bring forward its own national security legislation.

In fact, the Basic Law elaborates on this, and only allows Beijing to directly impose laws in a very limited number of cases, such as for the purposes of defence, foreign affairs, or in exceptional circumstances in which the National People's Congress declares a state of war or a state of emergency.

None of those exceptions apply here.

Nor has the National People's Congress sought to justify this law on any such ground.

Second, Mr Speaker, the National Security Legislation contains a slew of measures that directly threaten the freedoms and rights protected by the Joint Declaration.

In this respect, the House will be particularly concerned by the potentially wide-ranging ability of the mainland authorities to take jurisdiction over certain cases, without any independent oversight, and to try those cases in the Chinese courts.

This measure violates paragraphs 3(3) and (5) of the Joint Declaration, and directly threatens the rights contained in the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which under the Joint Declaration are to be protected in Hong Kong.

I think in particular, these measures represent a flagrant assault on freedom of speech and freedom of peaceful protest for the people of Hong Kong.

Third, the legislation provides that Hong Kong's Chief Executive, rather than the Chief Justice, will appoint judges to hear national security cases, a move that clearly risks undermining the independence of Hong Kong's judiciary, again which is protected by paragraph 3(3) of the Joint Declaration.

Fourth, Mr Speaker, the legislation provides for the establishment by the Chinese government of a new Office for Safeguarding National Security in Hong Kong run by and reporting to the mainland authorities.

That is particularly worrying Mr Speaker, because that Office is given wide-ranging powers, directly intruding on the responsibility of the Hong Kong authorities to maintain public order, again directly in breach of paragraph 3(11) of the Joint Declaration.

Mr Speaker, the authorities in Hong Kong have already started to enforce this legislation, with reports of arrests by the police, and official notices warning against waving flags or chanting.

In sum, Mr Speaker, this legislation has been enacted, as I said, in clear and serious breach of the Joint Declaration.

China has broken its promise to the people of Hong Kong under its own laws.

China has breached its international obligations to the United Kingdom under the Joint Declaration.

And it's also worth saying Mr Speaker, having committed to apply the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to the people of Hong Kong, China has now written into law wide-ranging exemptions, which cannot credibly be reconciled with its international obligations, or indeed its responsibilities as a leading member of the international community.

Mr Speaker, we want a positive relationship with China.

We recognise its growth, its stature and the powerful role it can play in the

world.

And I would say it is precisely because we respect China, as a leading member of the international community, that we expect the Chinese government to meet its international obligations, to live up to its international responsibilities.

It has failed to do so with respect to Hong Kong, by enacting legislation which violates its autonomy and threatens the strangulation of its freedoms.

It is a sad day for the people of Hong Kong, and one which can only undermine international trust in the Chinese government's willingness to keep its word, and live up to its promises.

For our part, Mr Speaker, the Prime Minister and the government are crystal clear that the United Kingdom will keep its word.

We will live up to our responsibilities to the people of Hong Kong.

And I can tell the House that after detailed discussions with my RHF the Home Secretary, I can confirm that we will now proceed to honour our commitment to change the arrangements for those holding BN(0) status.

I can update Honourable Members that we have worked with Ministers across Whitehall and we have now developed proposals for a bespoke immigration route for BN(0)s and their dependants.

We will grant BN(0)s five years limited leave to remain, with the right to work or study.

After these five years, they will be able to apply for settled status.

And after further 12 months with settled status, they will be able to apply for citizenship.

This is a special, bespoke, set of arrangements developed for the unique circumstances we face and in light of our historic commitment to the people of Hong Kong.

All those with BN(0) status will be eligible, as will their family dependants who are usually resident in Hong Kong. The Home Office will put in place a simple, streamlined, application process, and I can reassure Honourable Members that there will be no quotas on numbers.

I want to pay tribute to the Home Secretary and her excellent team at the Home Office for their work in preparation for a moment, let's face it, we all dearly hoped would not arrive.

And the Home Secretary will set out further details on our approach in due course.

Mr Speaker, in addition to changing the arrangements for BN(0)s, the UK will continue to work with our international partners to consider what further

action we should responsibly take next.

And I can tell the House, that yesterday, in the United Nations Human Rights Council, the UK made a formal joint statement expressing our deep concern about the human rights situation in both Hong Kong and Xinjiang.

Twenty-six other nations joined that statement.

This was the first time a formal statement has been made at the Human Rights Council on this issue, and it was delivered through our diplomatic leadership.

We will continue to work with our partners in the G7, our partners in the EU and our partners in the region. Mr Speaker, I say again that we want a positive relationship with China.

But, we will not look the other way on Hong Kong, and we will not duck our historic responsibilities to its people.

We will continue to bring together our international partners to stand up for the people of Hong Kong, to call out the violation of their freedoms, and to hold China to their international obligations it freely assumed under international law and I commend this statement to the House.

[UK to extend residence rights for British Nationals \(Overseas\) citizens in Hong Kong](#)

- Unprecedented extension of visa rights follows increasing restrictions on the rights and freedoms of the people of Hong Kong by the Chinese Government in breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration
- New immigration rules will allow BN(0) citizens the right to live and work in the UK for longer and give a path to full British citizenship
- Decision comes on the 23rd anniversary of Hong Kong's handover and fulfils PM's promise to 'uphold our profound ties of history and friendship with the people of Hong Kong'

Following the announcement by the Chinese Government that it will impose a national security law on Hong Kong, the UK has confirmed that new arrangements will be put in place for British Nationals (Overseas).

The UK Government made a commitment to change the rules for BN(0)s should China implement the new national security law first proposed in early June.

This new bespoke immigration route will allow BN(0)s to come to the UK without the current 6 month limit, granting them five years limited leave to

remain, with the ability to live and work in the UK.

After these five years, they will be able to apply for settled status and, after a further 12 months with that status, apply for citizenship.

The new bespoke route for BN(0)s will be implemented in the coming months, with exact date and further details to be announced in due course. In the meantime, we will ensure British National (Overseas) citizens who wish to come to the UK will be able to do so, subject to standard immigration checks.

Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, said:

We will not look the other way on Hong Kong, and we will not duck our historic responsibilities to its people. We will honour our commitment to change the arrangements for those holding BN(0) status and continue to stand up for the people of Hong Kong.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel, said:

China's decision to impose national security legislation on Hong Kong is deeply regrettable. Now China have imposed this law we will launch a new immigration route for British Nationals (Overseas) and their families.

The UK has a historic and moral obligation to British Nationals (Overseas) in Hong Kong and we will honour our commitment to them.

The new Chinese legislation was imposed yesterday, and crackdowns on the freedom of the people of Hong Kong have already taken place with the arrests of those protesting the new law.