

[Fighting poverty in Africa with agritech: apply for funding](#)

Around 75% of the poorest people in Africa live in rural areas. They depend heavily on agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods.

Climate change, scarce resources, demographic and dietary changes, and changing markets all present challenges and threaten gains made in fighting global hunger and poverty.

Innovation in agriculture and food systems is low in developing countries, particularly in Africa where only 28% of farmland is planted with modern crops compared with 65% globally.

The [Department for International Development](#) and the [Global Challenges Research Fund](#) working through the AgriTech Catalyst have up to £5 million to invest in agri-tech and food chain innovations in Africa.

Agritech innovation must alleviate poverty

Projects must show they could alleviate poverty through the adoption of agricultural and food systems technology and innovation.

Organisations can undertake:

- early stage feasibility studies
- or mid-stage industrial research
- or late stage experimental development

Innovations must be sustainable, minimise pollution, food loss and waste, and promote safe, healthy and nutritious diets. They must also consider gender equality and animal welfare.

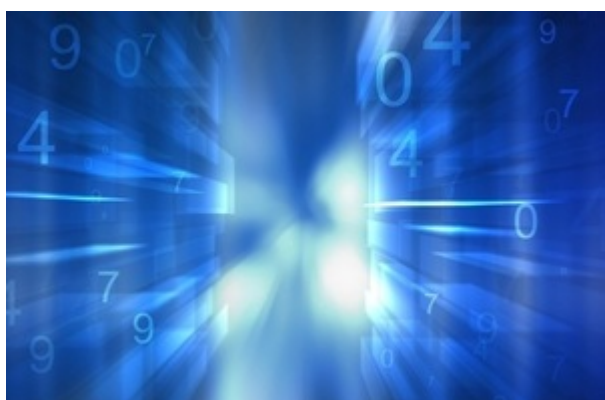
Projects can focus on:

- integrating smallholders into global and local supply chains
- increasing the value of production to smallholders
- control of crop pests, weeds and diseases
- meeting quality standards and improving productivity
- reducing food losses 'post-farm gate' and through the value chain
- food safety issues through the value chain
- new food technologies and data-driven food systems, including for urban areas
- challenges in downstream food processing, distribution, or storage and value addition
- innovation that supports food systems to deliver nutritious, healthy and safe food

Competition information

- the competition opens on 14 October 2019, and the closing date is at midday on 8 January 2020
 - projects must be led in the UK and include at least 1 UK and 1 African partner and 1 business
 - briefing events will be held on 24 October 2019 and 6 November 2019
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Personal Injury Discount Rate in Scotland – Government Actuary's report



The Government Actuary has published his determination of the [Personal Injury Discount Rate in Scotland](#), following completion of his review on 27 September 2019. The report concludes the discount rate should remain unchanged at RPI – 0.75%.

This rate is used to determine lump sum damage awards to people who make legal claims after suffering personal injuries.

Where a claim for future losses is settled as a single cash amount, the assessment of future losses and costs is converted into a lump sum allowing for the:

- period over which losses and costs are expected to be met
- assumed investment return that a pursuer expects to earn on the lump sum award

This assumed investment return is the Personal Injury Discount Rate.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Damages (Investment Returns and Periodical Payments) (Scotland) Act 2019 and the letter of engagement received from the Minister for Community Safety dated 25 June 2019. It follows on from the September 2018 report for Scottish Government on [the personal injury discount rate analysis](#) .

[Information and events for UK nationals living in Sweden](#)



In our continuous effort to reach as many UK nationals in Sweden as possible, we will be running citizens rights events.

The meetings are free and open to all interested UK nationals. Please make sure you register if you would like to attend.

Upcoming events in Sweden

Monday 10 February 17:00-18:00 Malmö

Her Majesty's Ambassador H.E. Ms Judith Gough will host a panel which includes representatives from the British Embassy in Copenhagen, the Swedish Migration Agency (Migrationsverket) and the Swedish Tax Agency (Skatteverket).

Please register via [this link](#)

Previous events in Sweden

Monday 7 October 2019 Stockholm

Wednesday 6 March Stockholm

To receive updates on what our team is up to, make sure to follow us at the [British Embassy Stockholm on Facebook](#) and on [Twitter](#)

Useful links

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1. 3 February 2020

The British Embassy will hold an information event for UK nationals in Malmö on 10 February 2020.

2. 30 September 2019

New Q&A session for UK nationals on 7 October in central Stockholm

3. 27 February 2019

First published.

[Inquiry prompted by TV appeal finds failings in running of education charity](#)

An [inquiry](#) has found that trustees of Aid and Peace Trust were responsible for misconduct and mismanagement after they failed to show how charitable funds were used and acted outside the charity's stated objects.

The regulator opened a statutory inquiry due to concerns about the management of the charity and the ongoing risk to charitable funds.

The Commission carried out a books and records inspection and engaged with the trustees, finding:

- poor financial oversight, with no annual returns submitted to the Commission since 2013
- funds transferred to private bank accounts of individuals, with trustees unable to provide assurances on how they had been spent
- over £68,000 spent outside of the charity's objects including on a TV appeal, and to send money to a hospital near the Savar building collapse in Bangladesh

The inquiry found that trustees had failed to manage and consider additional risks. There was no record of how the decision to organise the appeal was reached and no evidence that appropriate due diligence checks had been carried out on parties involved in the appeal, including a non-charitable political lobbying group.

The charity's paid co-ordinator was also employed by the television company involved and was connected to the charity's chairperson, yet there was no evidence to show that these potential conflicts of interests had been managed.

During the inquiry, the Commission exercised its powers to safeguard the charity's property, and ultimately ensured that over £16,000 in safeguarded funds were spent in line with the charity's objects. The inquiry secured a voluntary undertaking from all of the trustees that they would not act in the capacity of charity trustee for 3 years, after finding they were responsible for misconduct and mismanagement in the administration of the charity. The charity has been removed from the register.

Amy Spiller, Head of Investigations Team at the Charity Commission said:

Being a trustee is an important responsibility, and one that must be taken seriously. By failing to safeguard charitable funds and properly govern the charity, the trustees of this charity put both its reputation and the public's generous donations at risk.

It is right that they have been held to account, and that our intervention has ensured remaining funds could be properly accounted for and distributed to good causes.

The full report is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Ends

£4 million scheme to boost worker earnings and youth employment

Up to £1.2 million will be invested in Manchester and the West Midlands, dedicating extra time and resources to young people facing the biggest hurdles to getting a job, like care-leavers and young offenders.

Following a successful programme run with West Midlands Mayor Andy Street, Youth Employability Coaches will also continue to support young people into work and for up to 6 weeks after they start a job, helping them continue to build skills and stay in employment.

A further £2.8 million will be invested into cutting-edge technology to provide jobs 'apps' to recommend the best jobs and skills training to jobseekers and people looking to find better, higher-paid jobs.

It will provide local areas with information on local skills supply and demand, and jobseekers or those seeking to progress in work will be able to search for roles based on their skills and experience. The pilot service will show them exactly what new skills they need to move into higher-paid roles available near them.

Work and Pensions Secretary Dr Thérèse Coffey said:

I want to give everyone the best start in life, and every chance to get not just a job, but find that dream job.

That is why we will provide extra help for disadvantaged young people and use the latest technology to help people climb the career ladder.

We've seen 3.7 million more people in work since 2010 and wages outpacing inflation for a year and a half now, but I want to ensure we're always looking at new ways to help anyone no matter the barriers they face into a good job.

Both pilots could then be rolled out nationwide, helping reduce youth unemployment further after it fell 48% since 2010, and helping more people boost their earnings after new data this month showed average pay rising by its fastest rate in a decade.

Latest data released in September shows UK employment has increased by 3.7 million since 2010. Around three-quarters of that increase in employment has come from full-time, permanent and higher skilled roles.

Youth unemployment has also halved since 2010, with 451,000 more young people in work. The number of children growing up in workless households is also at an all-time low.

Income inequality is at its lowest for 30 years as wages grew by 4% in July, outpacing inflation for 18 months in a row.

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