

Call for Bids: China Network's International Programme – Second Funding Round

World news story

The British Embassy in Beijing is pleased to open a call for bids to the China Network's International Programme (Open Societies and Economic Resilience) for projects running between 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022.



Both Official Development Assistance (ODA) and non-ODA funding are available.

All projects should focus on human rights, the rule of law and/or economic resilience issues related to mainland China and Hong Kong. Issues on which we welcome bids include – but are not limited to – the below:

- Religious and cultural rights
- Technology and human rights
- Human Rights Defenders
- China's legal and judicial system
- Civil Society resilience
- Economic resilience
- China's role in regional trade

Selection criteria

Bids will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Project design: Feasibility of activities and outputs including the capacity of implementing organisation to deliver outcomes
- Impact: Delivering high-impact, sustainable, meaningful change on open societies, human rights and economic resilience issues related to mainland China and Hong Kong
- Viability and risks: Clear engagement/buy-in of key stakeholders. Robust analysis of key risks, and a plan of action to manage and mitigate those risks

- Value for money: Comparable and reasonable costs against the number of direct beneficiaries and the scale of achievable outcomes

Bids may also be assessed against the Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligibility rules where appropriate.

We draw your attention to the below key points:

- Proposals should be between £10,000 – £80,000 (105,000RMB – 840,000RMB).
- The entire project must begin and complete in the period 1 October 2021 and 31 March 2022.
- All funding must be activity-based (i.e. not for general staff costs, office rental etc.).

Process

1. Project proposals must be received by 23:59 (GMT) on Sunday 5 September. Late proposals will not be considered.
2. Proposals must be submitted using the attached forms only (Project Proposal Form and Activity Based Budget), which must be completed in English.
3. Proposals must be submitted
to: China.InternationalProgramme@fcdo.gov.uk

Attachments

[PrOF Template Project Proposal Form above £10k](#) (ODT, 49.8KB)

[PrOF Template Activity Based Budget](#) (MS Excel Spreadsheet, 26.7KB)

Guidance

[Project Proposal Form – Guidance](#) (ODT, 14.8KB)

[ABB Form – Guidance](#) (ODT, 26.3KB)

Published 23 August 2021

[82 testing providers to be issued warnings over misleading prices](#)

- 82 companies – which make up around 18% listed as offering day 2 and day 8 tests – face being removed from the GOV.UK list if they advertise misleading prices

- GOV.UK to be updated to reflect true cost of travel tests this week
- 57 companies to be removed as they no longer exist or do not provide a relevant testing service
- Regular spot checks will be introduced to ensure prices are accurate and providers are legitimate

More than 80 private travel testing companies will be issued a 2-strike warning and could be removed from GOV.UK for misleading prices, the Health and Social Care Secretary has announced today (Monday 23 August).

Following a rapid review of the pricing and service standards of day 2 and day 8 testing providers listed on GOV.UK, 82 providers – making up around 18% listed – have been identified as displaying lower prices on GOV.UK than are available on their website at the point of checkout.

GOV.UK will be updated to reflect the true cost of the tests and companies will be warned this week that they will be removed if they advertise misleading prices again.

A total of 57 companies will be removed from the GOV.UK list today as they no longer exist or don't provide day 2 and day 8 testing.

As part of the ongoing review, regular spot checks will be introduced from this week to make sure companies are complying with the rules to ensure prices displayed are accurate, providers are legitimate and companies have not changed their name to get back on the list.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said

It is absolutely unacceptable for any private testing company to be taking advantage of holidaymakers and today's action clamps down on this cowboy behaviour.

57 firms will be removed from the GOV.UK list and a further 82 will be given a 2-strike warning – if they advertise misleading prices ever again, they're off.

We are also introducing regular spot checks this week to make sure all private providers follow the rules and meet our high standards of transparency.

Companies will be removed from the GOV.UK list if they fail to take action within 3 days of strike 1 as part of the new 2-strike policy.

The findings of the review will be shared with the Competition and Markets Authority to support their own review of the market and align recommendations and actions.

The action will help ensure consumers can trust the testing providers listed on GOV.UK and only the most reliable companies are available.

Tests booked for travel with companies not listed can still be used for travel, providing those companies meet legal requirements.

Since the review began, the department has analysed and improved processes for managing the private provider list on GOV.UK, including introducing more stringent checks on pricing.

Guidelines will be published in due course to the market addressing pricing and service standards.

Earlier this month it was confirmed that UK holidaymakers will benefit from cheaper travel testing packages. As of 13 August, the cost of NHS Test and Trace tests for international arrivals were reduced from £88 to £68 for green or fully vaccinated amber arrivals, and from £170 to £136 for 2 tests for amber arrivals who are not fully vaccinated.

[Warmer, greener and cheaper homes as government opens a triple win upgrade for social housing](#)

- this investment will help tenants cut emissions while saving around £170 per year on energy bills
- part of wider £9 billion commitment to increase the energy efficiency of homes, schools and hospitals – driving forward the Prime Minister’s ambitious 10 Point Plan for a green industrial revolution

Tens of thousands of people across England are set to benefit from warmer, greener social homes, with social housing providers given the chance to bid for government funding to make major improvements to their stock.

Local authorities and housing associations across England will have the chance to secure a share in a significant £160 million cash injection through the government’s [Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund](#), set to enhance the country’s energy efficiency of socially rented homes.

In total, through this first wave of funding, up to 38,000 of the UK’s worst energy-performing social housing properties – with energy performance certificate (EPC) ratings of D or below – will have the chance to receive vital energy efficiency upgrades, including installation of insulation and more energy efficient doors, windows and heating systems.

This investment will help tenants save around £170 per year on energy bills,

while making their homes warmer and reducing carbon emissions.

Today's is the first wave of funding out of a total £3.8 billion to be spent over a 10-year period – with the aim of improving homes across the country to be cheaper to run, more energy efficient and fit for the future.

And with homes accounting for 15% of the UK's carbon emissions, the investment will also help towards eliminating the country's contribution to climate change by 2050.

Minister for Business, Energy and Corporate Responsibility, Lord Callanan, said:

Today's announcement is a vital step forward in eradicating UK fuel poverty and improving the lives and homes of low-income households, all while creating new work for local plumbers, builders and tradespeople who will be building homes fit for our greener future.

With a real appetite among councils and housing associations to make their homes cheaper to heat and warmer to live in, this investment is putting the power in the hands of the people who know their communities best, allowing the right decisions to be made for each home they manage while ensuring the very best for their tenants and the environment.

Taken together the funding will ensure that the government is achieving its aspiration to ensure as many homes as possible reach EPC Band C or above by 2035 in a way that is practical, cost effective, and affordable.

Mrs Vivienne Challice is an example of the tenant that social housing providers will be able to help through this scheme.

Mrs Challice, 79, has lived in a [Clarion Housing Association](#) property on the outskirts of Tonbridge for 49 years. Her home was one of the first to be upgraded thanks to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator and the work is now complete, with Clarion estimating that she will save more than £500 on her energy bills each year.

Mrs Vivienne Challice said:

Whilst work was being completed, I was visited every day by the resident liaison officer to check in, and the team on site have been brilliant. They have explained what was happening and how long it would take, and I appreciate how much work has been done to my home.

The weather hasn't been cold since the work was completed, and even on hot days, I noticed that my home was comfortably cool unlike before, which was great.

Councillor Samantha Hoy, Fenland District Council's Cabinet member for Housing, said:

We are extremely proud to be playing a part in this fantastic project, working alongside our partners Clarion and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to help improve the energy efficiency of social homes and to pilot new and innovative ways of working.

It's really exciting that the first property in Fenland has now been completed and we can't wait to see work start on the other homes across the district. The retrofit measures, including solar panels and insulation, will cut carbon emissions and give residents more money in their pockets from cheaper energy bills. Local businesses are also considering how they can take advantage of this opportunity to diversify the sector and convert at scale to help meet the national targets for energy efficiency.

This comes as emissions from domestic properties currently account for around 20% of the UK's carbon output.

Today's announcement is the latest step in the government's plan to reduce emissions from social homes, a priority area for the government to help eradicate fuel poverty and reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The government also plans to invest over £9 billion to increase the energy efficiency of homes, schools and hospitals, while supporting 50,000 jobs by 2030 and installing 600,000 heat pumps every year by 2028 – driving forward the Prime Minister's ambitious [10 Point Plan for a green industrial revolution](#).

Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Demonstrator Phase

Wave 1 of The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund follows an earlier [demonstrator phase](#) launched in March 2021, which awarded £62 million to projects across England and Scotland which will look to upgrade c. 2,300 socially rented homes to demonstrate innovative approaches to retrofitting social housing at scale, using a whole house approach.

An example of success out of the demonstrator phase includes Fenland District Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councils who secured £4.5 million from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Demonstrator, run by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, to improve the energy efficiency of social housing. The grant was match funded with a further £4.5 million investment from Clarion Housing Group, the largest social landlord in the country that owns and manages thousands of homes across the 2 local authorities.

The funds are being used to significantly upgrade 115 of the most energy inefficient Clarion homes in Fenland and Tonbridge and Malling, which

currently have an EPC rating of D or below. As a result, carbon emissions will be reduced, and it is expected that those living in upgraded properties will save between £300 and £500 on their energy bills each year. Clarion estimates that the project will also generate 68 jobs and apprenticeships in the green energy sector by employing local sub-contractors and installers.

Notes to editors

The SHDF Wave 1 Competition will launch 23 August and run for 8 weeks until 15 October 2021. Successful applicants will be announced in early 2022.

[Find out more about the competition.](#)

Accessible via: www.socialhousingretrofit.org.uk

Contactable via: info@socialhousingretrofit.org.uk

A Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) has been established to provide technical support for all social housing landlords interested in accessing funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. It will help with stock analysis; bid compilation and technical advice.

This technical assistance is being delivered by the Greater London Authority under the name of the Social Housing Retrofit Accelerator (SHRA) which is available to all registered providers of social housing across England who intend to apply to the SHDF Wave 1 competition.

The government has committed to a £3.8 billion Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund over a 10-year period to improve the energy performance of social rented homes, on the pathway to Net Zero 2050

Another way in which the government is improving energy efficiency of is through the [Sustainable Warmth Competition](#), launched in June 2021. It will award funding to Local Authorities to help them upgrade energy inefficient homes of low-income households in England. This Competition combines two schemes: a £200 million third phase of the Local Authority Delivery scheme (LAD3) and a £150 million initial phase of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG1) scheme. This is in addition to the [£500 million already awarded via the LAD scheme](#). Together this provides £350 million of funding in 2021 to 2022. Both schemes are focussed on owner occupiers and private rental landlords.

The UK government's [Future Homes Standard](#) is also improving the quality of housing across the country by ensuring new homes adhere to strict energy efficiency standards. From 2025, the UK government's Future Homes Standard will ensure that new homes produce at least 75% lower CO2 emissions compared to those built to current standards, with homes future-proofed with low carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency.

Young COVID patients share stories to urge others to get jabbed

- Government target hit as more than 1 million letters and texts have been sent inviting all 16 to 17-year-olds in England to get their jabs
- Latest figures show people aged 18 to 34 now make up more than 1 in 5 of those admitted to hospital with the virus
- Watch the [video](#)

Young coronavirus (COVID-19) patients have told their stories of battling the virus and suffering long-term debilitating effects as part of a new film encouraging people to get their vaccines.

The video features several patients who experienced serious symptoms of COVID-19 or developed long COVID, as well as the doctors and frontline staff who treated them, to warn of the dangers of the virus for those who are not vaccinated. It is narrated by A&E doctor, Dr Emeka Okorochoa.

It comes as people aged 16 to 17 in England are offered a COVID-19 vaccine by today (Monday 23 August), meeting the government's target. More than 360,000 have already been vaccinated and letters and texts were sent last week to the remaining people inviting them to book an appointment with their GP or visit their nearest walk-in centre.

All at-risk people aged 12 to 15 in England have also been invited for a vaccination and young people are encouraged to take up the offer as soon as possible to build vital protection before returning to school in September.

The latest figures show that hospitals are seeing a rise in unvaccinated young adults admitted with COVID-19. A fifth of COVID-19 hospital admissions in England are aged 18 to 34 – 4 times higher than the peak in the winter of 2020.

The patients who feature in the new short film have issued a rallying call: young people should take up the vaccine to avoid suffering a similar fate.

Quincy Dwamena, a 31-year-old videographer and support worker from East London, who spent 2 weeks in hospital with COVID-19 after putting off the vaccine, said:

I'm a healthy, young guy. I went to the gym often and have no underlying health concerns. I put off getting the vaccine because I thought the way I was living my life would mean there would be little to no chance of me catching the virus, or it would have

little effect.

But I ended up being hospitalised and thought I was going to die. My advice is to get the vaccine: don't put yourself and others at risk, I wish I'd got mine as soon as it was offered.

Megan Higgins, a 25-year-old special needs tutor from London who is suffering from long COVID, pleaded with others to get vaccinated. She said:

I was always careful about catching COVID-19, but I'm healthy and active so thought if I catch it, I'd probably brush it off. It's now been 8 months since I tested positive, and I can't even walk around the shops without getting exhausted. Long COVID is debilitating so please, get vaccinated. I wouldn't want anyone else to go through what I have.

Ella Harwood, a 23-year-old illustrator from London, said:

I'm young and fit but I was bed-bound for 7 months with COVID-19. Before I caught the virus, I was super active and had no health concerns, but I now suffer with asthma which I didn't have before and a number of allergies.

I fear I'll never be the same again but I'm making progress and I'm very grateful that I'm still alive. Please get vaccinated if you haven't already.

People aged 16 and 17 are able to get vaccinated at one of more than 800 GP-led local vaccination sites and NHS England has launched an online walk-in site finder to help this age group locate the nearest available centre. Further sites will come online over the coming days and weeks.

A total of 89,070,370 people have been vaccinated in the UK, including 47,573,794 people with a first dose (87.5%) and 41,496,576 people with a second dose (76.3%).

Uptake among under 30s is lowest in London where the interviews were filmed.

According to data from Public Health England, the highest COVID-19 case rates are among 20 to 29-year-olds with a case rate of 670.7 cases per 100,000 people in the 7 days to August 8, up week-on-week from 628.6.

More than 1 in 20 people aged 16 to 29 (6.3%) have had long COVID, which is higher than the national average. Many of these have said long COVID has had a major impact on their lives, especially the ability to exercise, work, and maintain relationships.

TV doctor and emergency medicine physician, Dr Emeka Okorochoa said:

As an A&E doctor, I've seen a lot during the pandemic. But nothing has shaken me like the sight of young, otherwise healthy adults, being rushed into our hospitals with COVID-19.

As well as their age, many of them have 1 other thing in common, they are unvaccinated. Vaccines truly are the way out of this pandemic and are the best way to protect everyone from the virus, so please get your vaccine.

Data from Public Health England (PHE) shows COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective against hospitalisation from the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant, the dominant strain in the UK. The analysis shows the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is 96% effective and the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is 92% effective against hospitalisation after 2 doses.

In all age groups the odds of experiencing symptoms for more than 28 days after post-vaccination infection was approximately halved by 2 vaccinations.

COVID-19 vaccines have saved around 95,200 lives and prevented 82,100 hospitalisations and 23.9 million infections in England alone, the latest data from Public Health England and Cambridge University shows.

Alongside Dr Emeka and patients, the film features interviews with the frontline workers who have been treating young COVID-19 patients.

Tom Williamson, physiotherapist at Epsom and St Helier Hospital Trust who features in the film, said:

We're treating more and more young COVID-19 patients who are still suffering with long COVID and it's heart-breaking to see. Patients are experiencing extreme fatigue which means they can no longer do the things they love, and some have had to quit work.

My message is clear, COVID-19 can affect anyone, regardless of your age or lifestyle so please get vaccinated. It's the best way to protect yourself and others.

The government is working closely with the NHS to make it as easy as possible to get a vaccine, including through 'grab a jab' pop-up vaccine sites across the country, such as London-based nightclub Heaven, as well as football stadiums and festivals up and down the country.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Vaccines are building a wall of defence in the UK and allowing us to safely live with this virus without restrictions.

Regardless of whether you're young, fit and healthy, these harrowing stories really show that COVID-19 can affect anyone. I

encourage everyone to come forward for both their jabs as quickly as possible as vaccines are the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones from serious illness.

Advice and information on the benefits of vaccination have been shared at every opportunity, including through a range of partnerships with industries catering for predominantly younger audiences.

This work has included partnerships with high-profile entertainment and sports personalities on short films encouraging people to get the jab, such as film stars Jim Broadbent and Thandiwe Newton, and football figures Harry Redknapp and Chris Kamara.

The government has also partnered with dating apps, social media platforms and large companies, such as Uber, Asda and Deliveroo, on adverts and incentives to get the vaccine. For example, Asda will offer £10 vouchers for their clothing brand George at select stores to 18 to 30-year-olds who spend over £20, and Deliveroo will be distributing thousands of £5 vouchers over the coming weeks.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

There is no doubt the COVID-19 vaccination programme is having a major impact, keeping around 82,100 people out of hospital and saving an estimated 95,200 lives in England.

But we are seeing more unvaccinated young people in hospital now than ever before. Please don't delay – get your jabs to avoid a similar fate to these brave people who have shared their stories.

Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England and vaccinations are taking place at sites including mosques, community centres and football stadiums.

[PM call with Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani: 22 August 2021](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke with the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin

Hamad al-Thani.



The Prime Minister spoke to the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, today regarding the situation in Afghanistan.

He thanked the Government of Qatar for its work in helping to facilitate ongoing evacuations from Kabul.

The leaders discussed cooperation on the diplomatic effort to stabilise the situation in Afghanistan and ensure any new government is inclusive and abides by its international obligations.

They agreed it was vital that the Afghan people continue to be supported with access to schools, hospitals and humanitarian assistance, and that the international community fully funds the aid response in Afghanistan and in the region.

The Prime Minister also looked forward to welcoming Sheikh al-Thani to the COP26 summit in November, noting the opportunities for Qatar to set ambitious emissions reductions targets.

Published 22 August 2021