

Call for Institutional Partnership, EITA South Asia

Partnership/role title: Research and Quality assurance

Please note there is also a call for research partners for this project – institutions can apply for either or both strands of the work.

Location: *Bangladesh*

Apply by: 01 June 2015

Start date 01 July 2015 *

End date: *31 March 2016, with possibility for extension if programme continues*

* This start date refers to the point at which existing documentation and research is shared, we envisage the team doing desk research (UK based) from 01 July, and being ready to visit Bangladesh by around September 2015.

Project description – about the project

English and IT skills are strongly connected to the labor market but the opportunities to develop and strengthen these skills in Bangladesh are limited, especially for adolescent girls. Girls and women in Bangladesh have less access to education and ICT than boys and men, and less access to learning English. This is resulting in a gender digital divide – which could lead to a serious gendered skill imbalance and unequal life chances for girls and women in the future. There are 28 million adolescents aged 10-19 years in Bangladesh which make up about one fifth of the total population. This is a big challenge for Bangladesh in terms of employability and skills development.

BRAC Adolescent Development Programme and the British Council initiated the English and ICT for Adolescents (EITA) project in 2012, to stimulate the educational possibilities for young girls aged 11 - 18 in rural areas of Bangladesh. The project creates and provides easy access to education by offering English and ICT education for adolescents at their doorstep through non-formal after school clubs. These 'safe spaces' are within the community and the English language and digital components are taught by peer group leaders who are trained by the British Council to deliver interactive, fun sessions to their peers using resources such as flashcards, as well as British Council learn English Kids resources pre-loaded onto netbooks to enable delivery despite of power and connection problems. In the longer term, we are looking at delivery options which will ensure the scalability and sustainability of the project such as m-learning.

In the short term, the project aims to:

- Reduce the gender divide in both English and digital skills
- Provide access to basic digital skills and knowledge which will enhance the girls' educational and employment opportunities
- Change attitudes of both participants and community members to stereotypical female roles within the host communities

The long term outcomes are:



- To ensure that girls have acquired English and digital skills to meet the requirements of the job market
- To enhance the girls' confidence in influencing lifestyle choices (e.g. early marriage) to enable them to act as advocates and influencers in the future

Since the project started, almost 700 girls have been reached directly through approximately 50 clubs within the network of over 9,000 clubs BRAC currently manage (these reach 250,000 adolescents, 90% of whom are girls). The British Council has accessed some funding in 2015-16 to scale up this project, and to pilot a similar model in India and Nepal. To this end, a robust review of the project is currently being carried out by an externally appointed reviewer the findings of which will inform the design of the project in the second phase, as well as the pilots in India and Nepal.

The India and Nepal projects are in the planning stage at present, but will need to begin delivery by September 2015. Nepal's timeline is currently being reviewed in light of the recent earthquake, and we hope the selected partner will be understanding of the need for some flexibility around this.

The project in Bangladesh has evolved since its launch in 2015, and now there is an opportunity for us to focus on the longer term societal impact of the project for the participants, for example in terms of age of marriage, completing school, access to higher / further education and access to the workplace. Due to the history of the project, we now have an opportunity to explore this through a research strand for which there is a separate call for partners. Institutions can apply for one or both strands.

Role description – about the role

The British Council is seeking an institutional partner to work alongside them and country partners to support the project design, quality assurance and ongoing research, of the second phase of the programme across the three countries in the region. We hope the relationship would evolve if the programme is successful so that the British Council and the selected HE Institution could jointly bid for donor funding to extend the programme from 16-17.

The partner would be expected to put forward experts in the following areas to contribute to different elements of the programme as required by the implementation plan: gender and education, uses of ICT for education, skills and language skills capacity building initiatives, non-formal education, educational research,. Ideally the team of experts would be led by one individual who would decide, in consultation with the British Council and country partners, which expert(s) would be required for each deliverable.

Some of the key deliverables anticipated are as follows (note these would be finalised in an inception workshop with British Council):

1. Review of project design in relation to literature and project reports

- Literature review to prepare an evidence base for the second phase project design
- Review pilot phase project documentation and give recommendations for improvements for the second phase

2. Lead on a small-scale research project:

- Identify and agree priority research questions and lead researcher
- Set-up small-scale research project within agreed budget and timelines
- Co-write research articles for publication in journals/websites

3. Quality assurance



- Review external reports before they are published

4. Capacity building for project teams

- Assess and train co-researchers from country-teams

For the research strand of this programme, we would envisage approximately (**number of days**) work split between the UK and the programme countries.

Qualifications and experience required for experts put forward

Essential*

- Post-graduate qualification in relevant subject (ELT/Linguistics and / or Education)
- Specialist qualification and / or significant experience of evaluation theory and design in the education sector, preferably in developing contexts
- Knowledge and experience of the challenges relating to improving English and ICT skills at secondary level, preferably in developing and non-formal contexts
- Knowledge and experience of gender related issues in developing contexts

The institution should also have experience of taking on such assignments as well as managing and deploying internal teams of experts.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the education sector in South Asia, with a focus on Bangladesh, India and Nepal

**Please note that experts may have some or all essential criteria, but the team should demonstrate expertise in all.*

How to apply

Interested institutions should send a short covering letter tailored to the above requirements, expert CVs, and a short 2 – 3 page proposal indicating how the institution would approach this partnership to Gaynor.Evans@britishcouncil.org by 5pm local time on 01 June 2015. (Bangladesh is currently BST +5).

There will be an opportunity during the application period for interested parties to have a telecom with the programme manager if any clarification of the project is required. Please contact Gaynor Evans directly to arrange this.

Unfortunately we will not be able to respond to every application and will only contact those who meet the required standards by the deadline for CV submission.

