



Making science work for development



Building a partnership of equals: The role of funders in equitable and effective international development collaborations

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Outline

1. Introduction to UKCDS
2. Changes to UK funding landscape
3. Equitable partnerships report, models of partnerships explored
4. Funders current practices to promote equitable partnerships?
5. How can funders make partnerships more equitable?
- 6. 10 ways funders can influence equitable partnerships**



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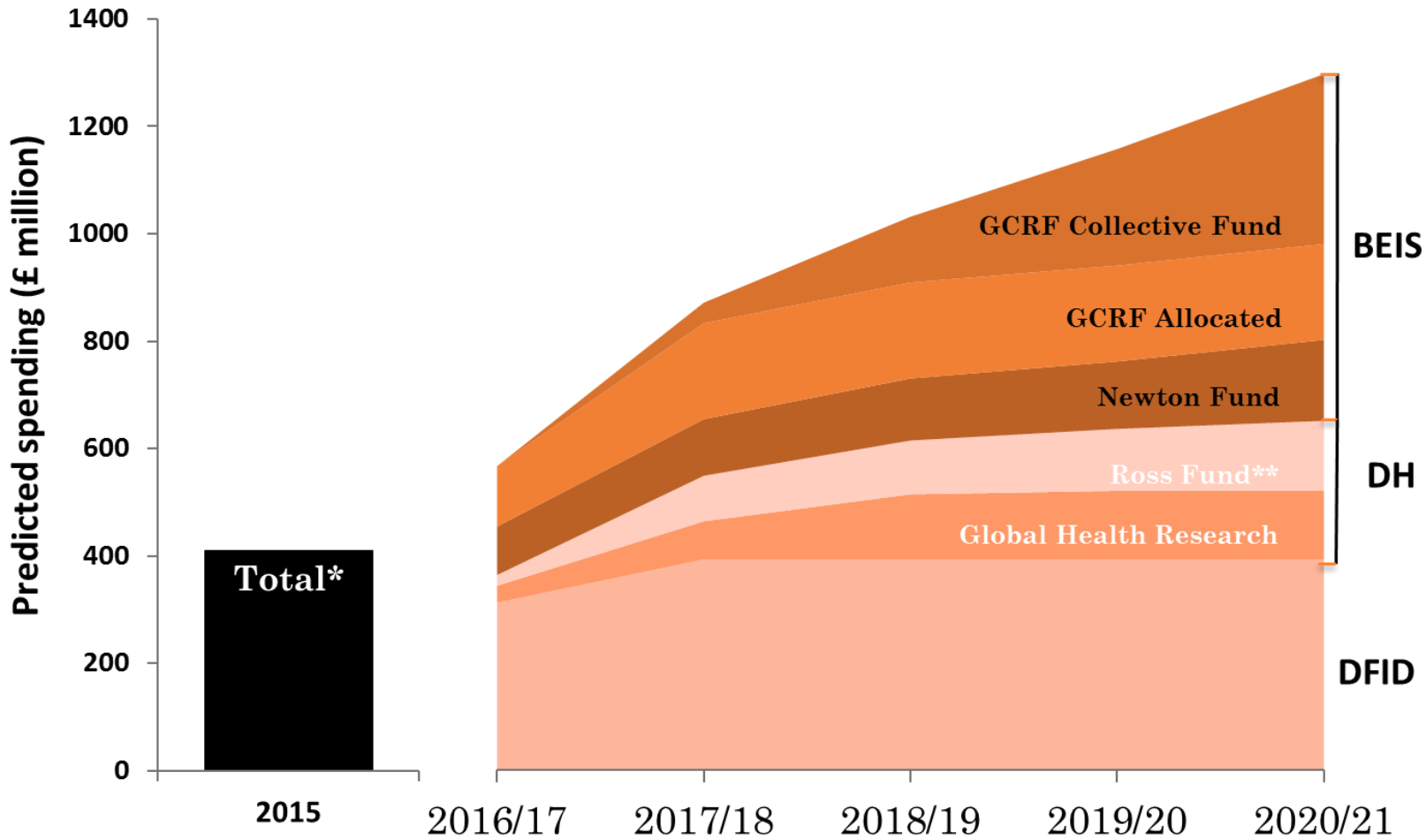
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Rising UK ODA R&D spend across government 2015 – 2021



* Based on UKCDS estimates from published forecasts or figures provided by members

** DH managed Ross Fund spending. Minority (estimated at <20%) is for purposes other than research, surveillance or innovation



Report: Building partnerships of equals

- **Driver:** Increased UK ODA funding for research, need for international development collaborations to solve global challenges.
- **Purpose:** Inform funders of partnership models which exist and practices which can be/ have been put in place to ensure equitability.
- **Methodology:** Key interviews with global funders and literature review.
- *What can funders do to support equitability in partnerships?*



Dr Jennie Dodson

UK Collaborative on Development Science



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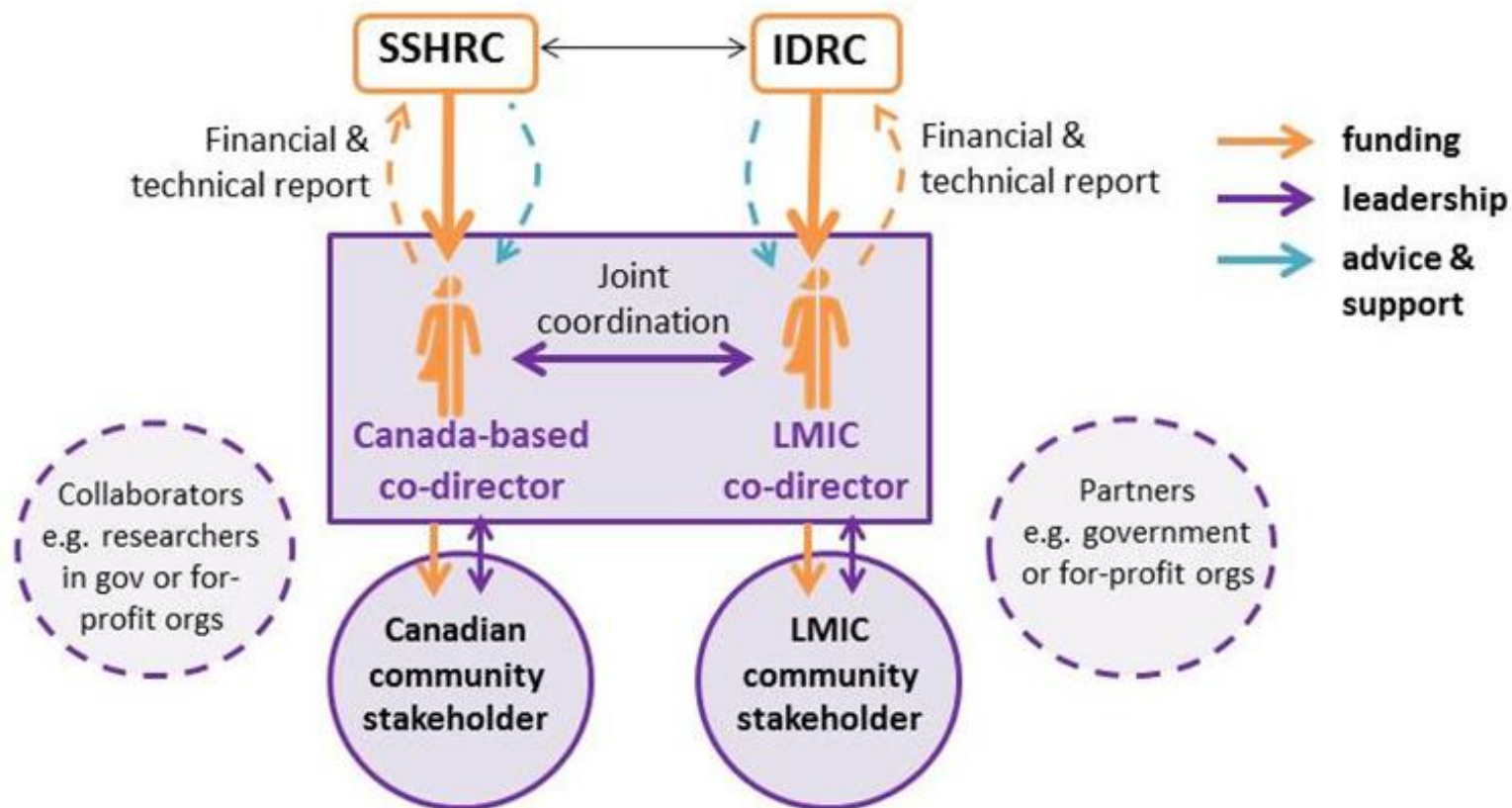
UK CDS



Four main partnership models

- 1. Northern:** Named project lead Northern and funding distributed through Northern institution.
- 2. Joint:** Joint Project leadership and funding split between North and Southern partners.
- 3. Southern:** Named project lead Southern, and funding distributed through Southern institution.
- 4. Flexible/open structure:** Funding recipients able to set project structure which fits their needs.

Joint model: International Community-University Research Alliance (ICURA)



What are funders doing to promote equitable partnerships?

Pre-call: Making calls accessible and supporting new partnerships.

- Match-making.
- Reaching underrepresented groups
- Preparatory grants – 2 stage funding calls.

What are funders doing to promote equitable partnerships? (2)

During the award (application review and grant period)

- Diverse peer review panel; representatives from different disciplines, development agencies, private sector.
- Requesting project agreements/ MoUs to be shared in initial stages – early engagement of all partners.
- Setting up advisory groups with high level Southern representation.
- Budgets – ensuring projects allocated sufficient and equitable budgets for indirect costs (flights, staff development, % overheads).
- Actively addressing power dynamics in partnerships.

What are funders doing to promote equitable partnerships? (3)

Post grant

- Benefit sharing of research outcomes including:
 - Intellectual property
 - Data ownership and sharing
 - Publication authorship

Challenges funders experience in partnerships

- Balancing priorities of different countries.
- Embedding assessments of partnerships at the proposal stage.
- Balancing equitability for multiple players within partnerships.
- Financial assurance – ability to manage and account for grant funding

How can funders make partnerships more equitable? (1)

- Standardisation and simplification of application processes.
- Provide follow on funding to support growth of partnership.
- Be aware of selection bias towards experienced researchers and existing partnerships.
- Take into consideration Southern countries' priorities.
- Be aware of wider political or economic events which may impact research.

How can funders make partnerships more equitable? (3)

- Support capacity strengthening at different levels:
 - Training for students, Laboratory technicians and support staff.
 - Research management, financial management capacity strengthening
 - Strengthening of research system capacity

How can funders make partnerships more equitable? (4)

- Be aware of problems arising between partnerships.
- Remember time taken to build partnerships, and allocate sufficient time and funding to do so.
- Understand financial administration capabilities of partners.
- Equitable support to non-academic partners.
- Embed principles such as KFPE guidelines or RFI framework in funding calls and review of applications.

10 ways in which funders can influence equitable partnerships

1. Inclusive agenda setting
2. Funding new research questions and valuing complementary skills and knowledge
3. Setting the tone in research calls
4. Rewarding skilled project managers
5. Looking for equality beyond the leaders
6. Equitable budgets, research and financial management
7. Providing ongoing institutional capacity strengthening
8. Widening participation
9. Investing for the long term
10. Working closely with other funders and agencies in the North and South.

Future plans for work?

- Deeper exploration of the role of Southern Funders in partnerships
- Review of successful and unsuccessful research partnerships and why?
- Meetings with funders to discuss equitable research partnerships.



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Thank you for listening

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