

# The British Academy International Engagement

Pioneering ideas and  
collaborations to shape  
a better world



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## Foreword

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The British Academy's fundamental purpose is to promote the study of peoples, cultures and societies – past, present and future. We cannot – and should not – do that without crossing borders – geographical, political, psychological and cultural. The British Academy is thus only part, albeit an important one, of a much wider and deeper cosmopolitan academy of learning and liberal thought. Those values, of openness and inclusion, are at the heart of what the Academy does to engage with the global community, under the auspices of the International Engagement Committee, which, as the Academy's Foreign Secretary and Vice-President for the past four years, I have been privileged to chair.

We live in turbulent times. Critical thinking, open debate and internationalism are increasingly under attack. It is now more important than ever that the Academy remains a beacon for the ideals which it has staunchly defended for over a century. Our international mission, delivered through the programmes we pursue, the science diplomacy in which we engage, the networks we foster, and the people and ideas we support, is to open the UK to the world and vice versa. Above all, we strive to ensure that the civilisational value of the humanities and the social sciences is recognised, and used to build a better world.

In the last five years, we have had a step change in our international engagement with annual funding from Her Majesty's Government rising from some £2.3 million to about £22 million in 2019. This is in addition to £4 million per annum that we provide to support a network of British International Research Institutes across Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Among many other things, this booklet offers a snapshot of our international activities. It covers some of the innovative research projects that we fund, the impact of our programmes, and the way in which we have been able to draw on the expertise of our Fellows and award-holders to inform public and policy debates.

I hope that this will encourage you to join our continuing efforts to recognise the value of the humanities and the social sciences, to support researchers and ideas that aim to shape a better world, and to help us sustain and extend the UK's international engagement and collaboration now and in the future. Together we can find a way to negotiate the current times of uncertainty and turbulence, creating a global intellectual community in which cooperation, mobility, openness and curiosity thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ash Amin'.

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Ash Amin CBE FBA  
Foreign Secretary & Vice-President  
The British Academy



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# Research Leader

## Investing in talented people and excellent ideas in the UK and overseas

We support UK-based and international researchers in disciplines across the humanities and the social sciences. In doing so, we strive to ensure that the UK maintains its position as a world-class leader in research. We also seek to further the continued development of a global intellectual community that transcends borders and cultures.

Our international programmes build capacity across the career spectrum. In recent years many of them have increasingly been geared towards nurturing the next generation of researchers around the world, promoting interdisciplinary research, and encouraging engagement across communities of knowledge and practice.

For example, our Visiting Fellowships and Global Professorships enable outstanding scholars from across the world to develop long-lasting links and collaborations with UK counterparts, while our Writing Workshops equip early career researchers in developing countries with the knowledge and skills to publish in international journals.

Discover more:  
[thebritishacademy.ac.uk/international](https://thebritishacademy.ac.uk/international)

# Global Challenges

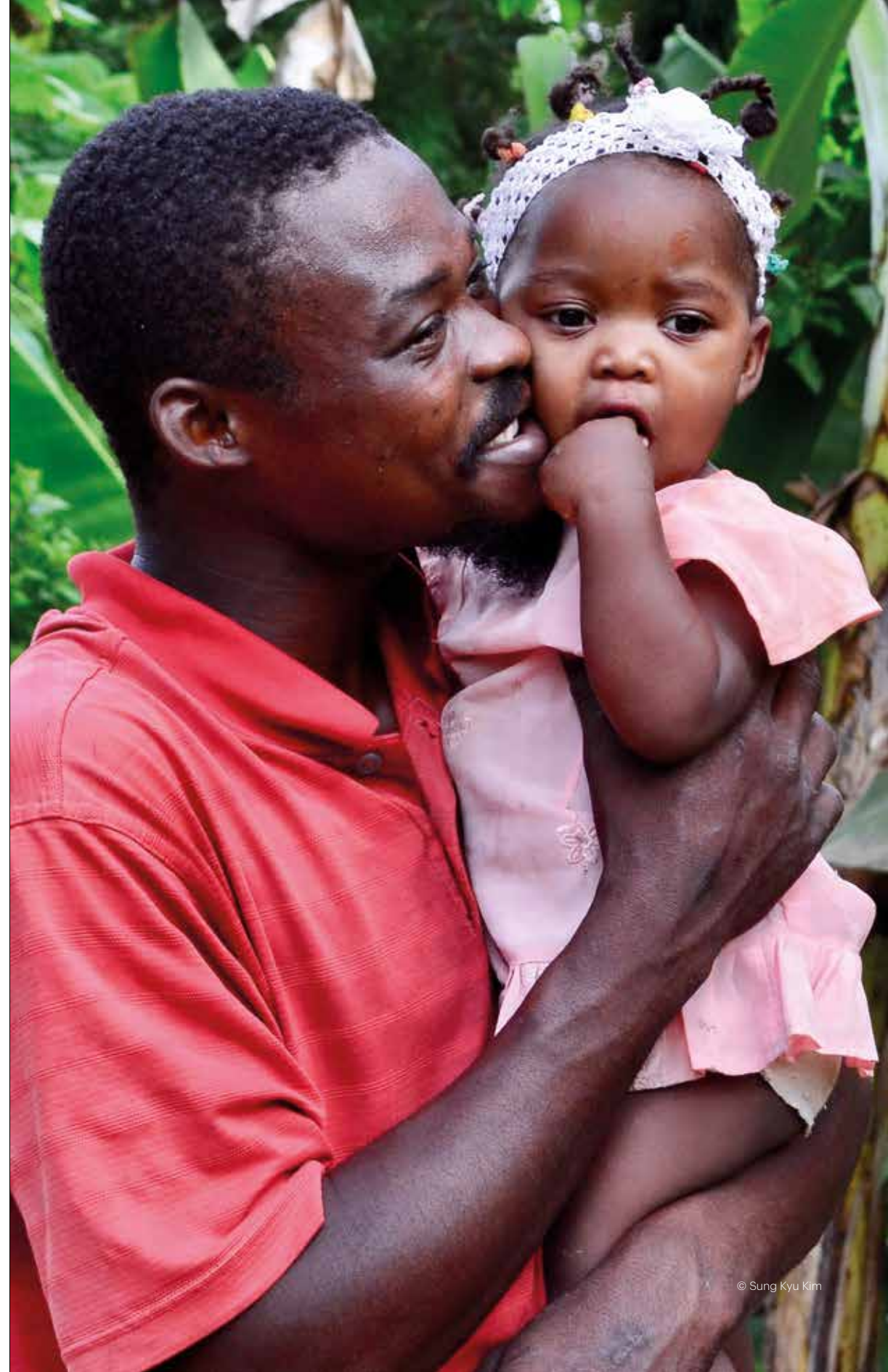
## Bringing the humanities and the social sciences to bear on global challenges

Through the expertise of our Fellowship and the innovative research that we fund, we use pioneering ideas to try to shape a better world. The humanities and the social sciences are vital to enriching and deepening our understanding of global challenges and how to tackle them effectively.

Our international programmes serve to inform policy and public debates, and generate new evidence and analysis on topical issues of global significance – from early childhood development to sustainable peace. The activities which we undertake are currently guided by five international thematic priorities:

Urban Futures; Justice, Rights and Equality; Knowledge Frontiers; Conflict, Stability and Security; and Europe's Futures.

Using our convening power to bring together UK and overseas researchers, national and international policymakers and practitioners from business and NGO communities, we have fed into the development of thinking on a wide range of issues, from the role of human rights in post-conflict statebuilding, to embedding European expertise in government, to pursuing engagement on the Korean Peninsula.



## Discovering insights and driving change internationally



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### EU

Our research is illustrating the implications of the UK's decision to leave the European Union – from how the rights of UK and EU citizens are likely to be affected to how class, race and national divisions may play out post-Brexit.

### China

Our projects are driving new research collaborations between the UK and China on issues ranging from transcultural networks in the Bronze Age to speech signal processing for hearing aids.

### Chile

In Chile, our research is breaking boundaries by exploring the stigma surrounding people with intellectual disability disorders – an issue on which little research has been conducted to date.

### UK

Research by one of our Visiting Fellows on how the 'gig economy' is affecting the labour market in the UK is feeding into ongoing discussions about the future of Uber in London.

*Since 2017 our international programmes have supported 433 new research and capacity-building projects in the UK and overseas.*

## Uganda

A researcher we are supporting is conducting an empirical study on sign language interpretation on the African continent, which will inform the development of the first ever university-level qualification in this field in the East Africa region.



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## Nepal

A team of archaeologists through our Cities & Infrastructure programme is working with engineers and local government officials in Nepal to improve the seismic safety of Kathmandu's historic urban infrastructure.

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## Indonesia

Our researchers are advising the Bali Process Business and Government Forum - a new initiative to combat human trafficking and forced labour in the Indo-Pacific region.

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## Turkey

A project led by the British Institute at Ankara is working with local communities to develop the Pisidia Heritage Trail to their socio-economic advantage.



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## Brazil

In informal settlements in São Paulo, researchers we are funding are collaborating with local authorities to improve landslide and flood defences.

## Philippines

A researcher we are supporting is liaising with civil society organisations and parliamentarians to prepare new legislation aimed at combatting news disinformation and improving transparency around political campaigns on social media.

*The project teams supported by our international programmes since 2017 are based in 96 institutions in the UK and 309 research centres across the world.*

## Haiti

Project findings from our Tackling the UK's International Challenges programme on how to safeguard children from sexual exploitation in the context of peacekeeping operations have been translated into a toolkit which is being implemented by the UN Mission in Haiti.

## Ghana

One of our research projects has been informing the development of a new labour migration policy aimed at affording better protection to workers.

## India

A group of researchers we are funding is using innovations in digital technology to identify blindspots in urban infrastructure that increase the risk of gender-based violence, thus helping to make Indian cities safer for women.

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## Kenya

Working with local communities, a research team from our Early Childhood Development programme has helped to improve the rate of breastfeeding through providing nutritional and parenting guidance.

## Expanding the UK's global reach

We support a network of British International Research Institutes in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, which are vibrant centres that contribute to fostering exchange with overseas researchers and furthering the UK's international outreach.

Through collaboration with sister academies and other partner organisations worldwide, such as the All European Academies, the Union Académique Internationale and the International Science Council, we also work to expand the UK's global reach and influence international debates.

The science diplomacy in which we engage supports the UK's efforts to build new, or strengthen existing, relationships with other nations, and ultimately creates an environment of trust and cooperation where knowledge and innovation can flourish for the benefit of humanity.



## British International Research Institutes:

### British Institute at Ankara

The BIAA enables and encourages research in Turkey and the Black Sea region in a wide range of fields, including archaeology, ancient and modern history, heritage management, social sciences and contemporary issues in public policy and political sciences.

[biaa.ac.uk](http://biaa.ac.uk)

### British School at Athens

The BSA, founded in 1886, is the UK's academic hub for the humanities and social sciences in Greece and its wider Mediterranean contexts. With bases in Athens and Knossos, its mission is to conduct, facilitate and promote research of international excellence in all periods – from the Palaeolithic to the present – and across all disciplines.

[bsa.ac.uk](http://bsa.ac.uk)

### British School at Rome

The BSR is a residential centre in Europe for interdisciplinary research and practice, supporting the full range of arts, humanities and social sciences, promoted through a vibrant programme of events, conferences, exhibitions and publications.

[bsr.ac.uk](http://bsr.ac.uk)

### British Institute in Eastern Africa

The BIEA supports and promotes research excellence in the humanities and social sciences across the wider region of eastern Africa, stretching from Sudan to Mozambique and Madagascar. Its research centre in Nairobi hosts several partner institutions, and is a leading hub for creative and intellectual activity across the region.

[biea.ac.uk](http://biea.ac.uk)

*Over 50% of the Academy's Postdoctoral Fellows since 2017 have been non-UK nationals, with nearly 60% from elsewhere in the EEA.*

*Since 2017 more than 50% of the Academy's Small Research Grants have been used by UK-based scholars to conduct research internationally.*

### Council for British Research in the Levant

The CBRL is the UK's academic hub for the study of the Middle Eastern countries of Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus. Covering the breadth of social sciences and humanities, the CBRL connects UK scholars to the Levant and has two research institutes: the Kenyon Institute in East Jerusalem and the British Institute in Amman.

[cbrl.org.uk](http://cbrl.org.uk)

### British Institute of Persian Studies

Celebrating its sixtieth anniversary in 2021, the BIPS is the UK's foremost learned society dedicated to promoting and supporting scholarship and research excellence on all aspects of Iran and the wider Persianate world, and increasing public understanding and knowledge of this region.

[bips.ac.uk](http://bips.ac.uk)

### Society for Libyan Studies

The SLS supports research on, and engagement with, the cultures and heritage of Libya, North Africa and the Western Mediterranean. Its disciplinary fields include archaeology, history, geography, the natural sciences, literature and linguistics, and it is increasingly moving into new research areas and towards new collaborations and impacts. The SLS is based in London.

[societyforlibyanstudies.org](http://societyforlibyanstudies.org)

### British Institute for the Study of Iraq

The BISI is the UK's leading institution for arts, humanities and social sciences research and education on Iraq, from the earliest times until the present. For over 80 years, the BISI has supported academic excellence and understanding of Iraq by funding projects, publishing vital research, organising conferences and public lectures, and re-training Iraq's scholars and cultural heritage professionals.

[bisi.ac.uk](http://bisi.ac.uk)



## Fostering international research collaboration and mobility

International collaboration and mobility are essential to knowledge production, the strengthening of research capabilities, and the fostering of global cultural understanding.

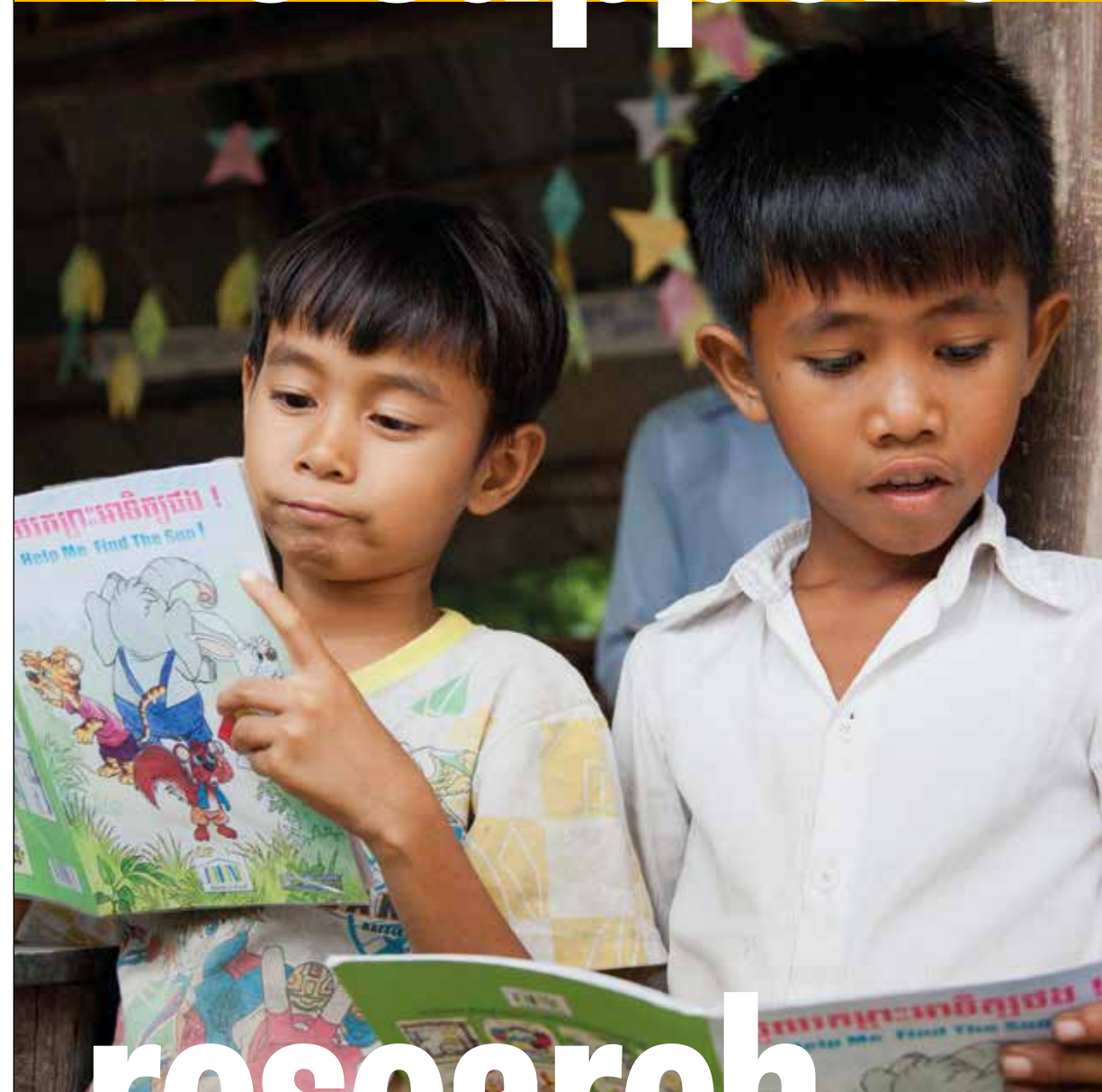
Engagement across geographic and disciplinary boundaries, as well as across various communities of knowledge and practice, enables better responses to the complex and interconnected questions that face societies today. It encourages the development of new ideas and approaches, and promotes scholarly exchange for the common good.

Our programmes stimulate international collaboration and mobility by attracting talented overseas researchers to the UK, supporting UK-based scholars wishing to engage internationally, and encouraging research that transcends borders.

*Since 2017 our international programmes have enabled 218 scholars from 44 countries to visit the UK and develop collaborations with UK researchers. 40 Newton International Fellowships have been awarded to early career researchers from 21 different nations around the world.*

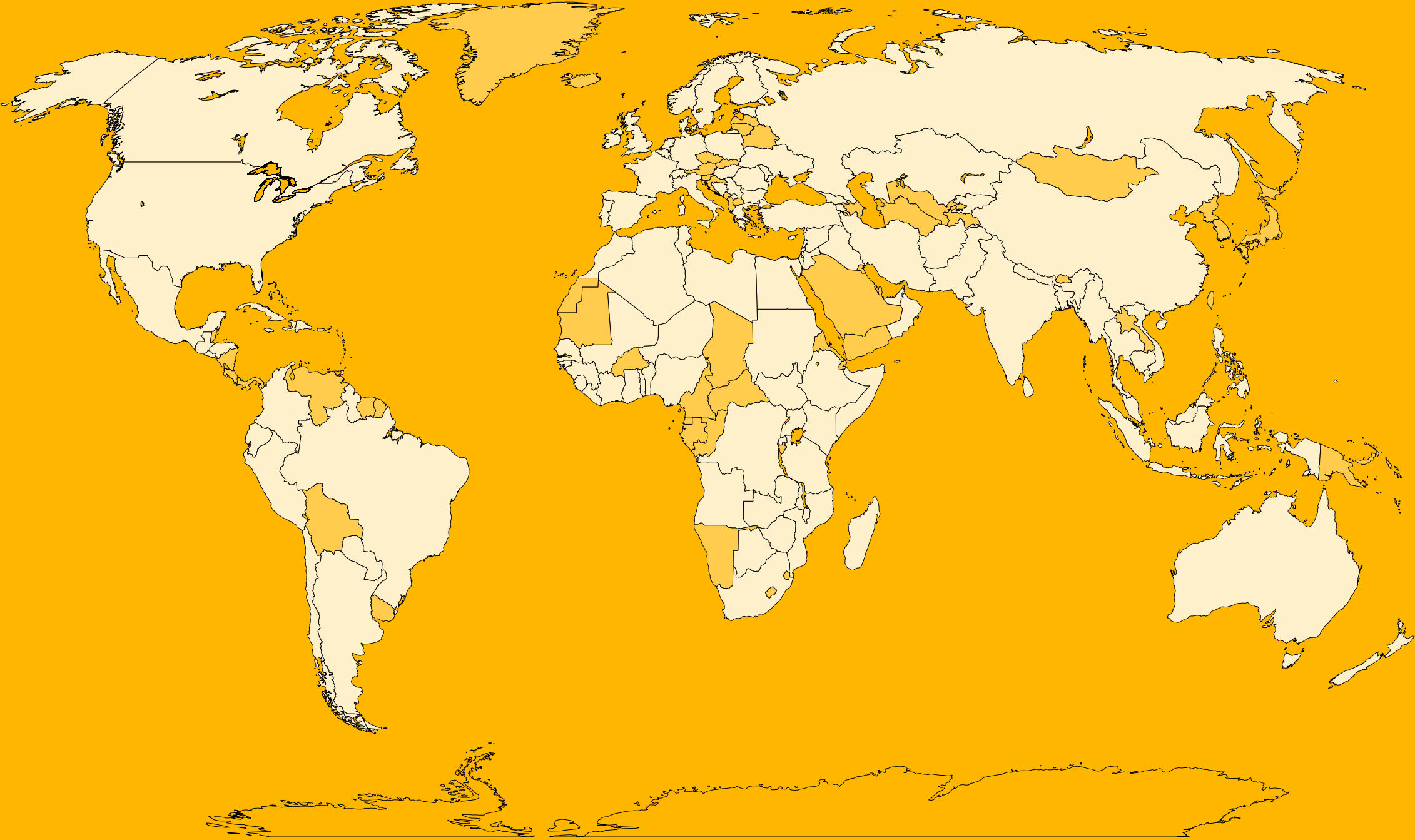
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# Where we support



# research

○ Countries where we currently support research and researchers



# About the Academy

The British Academy is the UK's independent national academy representing the humanities and the social sciences. For over a century it has supported and celebrated the best in UK and international research and helped connect the expertise of those working in these disciplines with the wider public.

The Academy supports innovative research and outstanding people, strengthens policymaking and seeks to raise the level of public understanding of some of the biggest issues of our time, through policy reports, publications and public events.

The Academy represents the UK's research excellence worldwide in a fast changing global environment. It promotes UK research in international arenas, fosters a global approach across UK research, and provides leadership in developing global links and expertise.



Discover more:

[thebritishacademy.ac.uk](http://thebritishacademy.ac.uk)

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