

The British Academy

Newton Fund – Case Studies

Funding Source: Newton Fund under the responsibility of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

The Newton Fund was launched in 2014 and originally consisted of £75 million each year for 5 years. In the 2015 UK Spending Review it was agreed to extend and expand the Fund. The Newton Fund was extended from 2019 to 2021 and expanded by doubling the £75 million investment to £150 million by 2021, leading to a £735 million UK investment to 2021, with partner countries providing matched resources within the Fund. These awards are funded by the Newton Fund, which is part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment.

In 2014, **Dr Banu Demir Pakel**, Bilkent University, Turkey, was awarded a Newton Advanced Fellowship for 2015-17 to work with **Professor Beata Javorcik**, Department of Economics, University of Oxford, on **Using Processing Trade to Facilitate Innovation in Response to a Competitive Shock – exploring implications for Turkey's economy**.

This project focused on an important and policy-relevant topic in trade. Upon the request of the Central Bank of Turkey (CBRT), Dr Demir delivered three-days of lectures on international trade and finance to the Bank's researchers and experts in November 2015. These lectures contributed to the capacity building efforts undertaken by CBRT.

Professor Javorcik also visited the CBRT in February 2016. She presented the results of the project and discussed with the CBRT trade-related policy issues relevant to Turkey. The results of the project have attracted interest of other central banks. Professor Javorcik's presentations at the Banque de France, Bank of Italy and the National Bank of Poland have been very well received.

Export-led growth is one of the prominent strategies for economic growth, and many developing countries have adopted it as their main growth strategy. The research led by Dr Demir shows a new margin of firm-level adjustment in response to heightened competition in international markets: provision of trade credit. Results suggest that the ability to provide financing can give producers, particularly those operating in developing/emerging economies that are viewed as risky business partners, a competitive edge in foreign markets. Since Turkey also adopts an export-led growth strategy, the research provides valuable input for policy makers. It also has implications on how the large sums allocated to aid for trade could be productively used.

The project has also fostered knowledge transfer by creating direct training opportunities for graduate students in the partner institution.

Results from the project can be read at <https://voxeu.org/article/gaining-competitiveness-through-trade-credit>.

The academic article can be accessed at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022199618300084>.

In 2015, **Dr Scott Drimie**, Stellenbosch University, South Africa, was awarded a Newton Mobility Grant for 2016-17 to work with **Dr Jeff Jia**, University of Exeter Business School, on **Developing Sustainable Agricultural Supply Chains: Building Capacity for Executive Training and Supply Chain Research with Co-operative Managers**.

The project and research worked towards a better understanding of supply and value chain limitations for small scale farmers to engage with the market to reduce poverty and improve access to food (SDG 1 and 2 and 8). This project aimed to understand and inform policy makers and practitioners with regards to improved market access for emerging farmers. This was done by better understanding supply chain limitations to then identify the best points of intervention and support. The project enabled the convening of experts to meet and discuss next steps with better understanding of what limits value chain efficiency and access by small holder farmers. Being able to meet with a diverse team of experts and exchange knowledge and experience improved the research on the small holder market access work.

The work is ongoing but has meant that in areas of KwaZulu Natal where farmers have participated there has been significant potential for livelihoods to be improved. This project has led to the continuation of work in South Africa with small holder farmers, retailers and the department of agriculture to help work with farmers to help enable them to improve their livelihoods, As well as benefitting Dr Drimie personally, the project led to the strengthening of partnerships with academics, government and practitioners for Julia Harper and the Food Security Initiative at Stellenbosch University.

The project enhanced an existing research partnership in South Africa between Stellenbosch University and the Spar group and the rural hub model as well as with WesBank and the First Rand Foundation. Both of these partnerships enabled further funding for further work. It also led to a new network between Stellenbosch University and Exeter which enabled staff exchange and shared learning and expertise.

The work started by the Newton Fund project has been taken forward with the award of a grant of 1,500,000 ZAR from the First Rand Foundation – WesBank.

Dr Jeff Jia is now Chair Professor of Supply Chain Management at The York Management School, University of York.

Dr Serdal Temel, Ege University, Turkey, was awarded a Newton Advanced Fellowship for 2015-17 to work with **Professor Mine Karatas-Ozkan** of the Southampton Business School Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Southampton on **Entrepreneurial Universities, Innovation and the Role of Technology Transfer Offices in Emerging Economies**.

This project successfully increased awareness about technology transfer, Intellectual Property and entrepreneurship, particularly facilitating social entrepreneurship and social innovation start-ups. During the implementation of the project Dr Temel and colleagues provided seminars, training programs and lectures about innovation, IP and entrepreneurship to students, graduates and other academics. These activities increased awareness among these groups and helped to facilitate personal meetings, creating links for further discussion such as idea development, knowledge exchange and mentoring. As a result, based on recent contacts, there are four start-ups directly established as a result of the project, hiring ten people. The experience gained by Dr Temel personally was also passed on to colleagues at Ege University who were subsequently also successful in winning external

research funds, so capacity building within the research community has been particularly facilitated.

The data analyses of the results from the project are ongoing, and Dr Temel was subsequently awarded a second Newton Advanced Fellowship for 2018-20 , with Professor Jeremy Howells, Kent Business School, University of Kent to further develop his work on entrepreneurship on Overcoming Barriers and Developing Best Practice for Supporting Entrepreneurship and Trade in Universities and Innovation Intermediaries: Lessons for Turkey and the UK. He has already, however, become an invited Executive Group Member of the National Technology Transfer Office as a result of his experience.

Professor Lesley Wood (North-West University) worked with **Dr Mary McAteer** (Faculty of Education, Edge Hill University) on **Ubunye: Empowering Parents in Disadvantaged South African Communities to Support Classroom Learning**.

Professor Wood's Newton Advanced Fellowship which ran from 2015 to 2017 enabled direct engagement between South African and UK colleagues helping to address the problem of parental support for schooling to ensure children stay in school and progress (Sustainable Development Goal, SDG 4). Participating parents learned many skills and gained confidence and improved relationships with their own children and are now rolling out the programme to other parents both in their own community and elsewhere. By understanding that if children have more support to stay in school, they will be more likely to finish education and be employable, the project has helped to demonstrate the value of education. The participants also learnt skills that improved their employability – for example, computer, facilitation, communication are three which they developed. The community members now have a programme to educate other community members. For the first time, parents from the community collaborated with teachers and researchers to develop a contextually relevant programme that was based on research they conducted in their community, rather than one developed by university 'experts'. In the emerging field of community-based research, this project's findings have been important

Professor Wood is now working with researchers from 5 universities in South Africa (Stellenbosch University, University of the Western Cape, Nelson Mandela University, University of the Free State and Rhodes University in 3 different provinces of South Africa) on a project which promotes community-based research similar to the Newton Fund project and one of the partners was previously a PhD candidate trained on this project. Professor Wood and colleagues are busy developing a short learning programme and other curriculum interventions to build capacity for community-based research such as the Newton Fund project; also developing new ethical procedures to cater for this sort of research.

Dr McAteer is working with colleagues in Edge Hill, developing a participatory project with the immigrant/refugee community in the NW UK. They are working with groups of refugees, undertaking a psycho-geographical tour of their town/local area, exploring the places they go regularly, and what those places mean to them, documenting these tours with art, photography and sound recordings. The materials will be collated as exhibition and workshop material, including digital, interactive maps that can be shared with the wider community, and invite feedback. Specific outcomes will include the production of teaching materials for schoolchildren, community members and the universities, emphasising the way in which collaboratively it is possible to challenge unspoken borders. Shared conversations throughout the project will enable the sharing of stories, and the development of greater

understanding of 'the refugee crisis' on both individual and collective, and in future, as the project develops, trans-national bases.

Dr Catherine Draper, University of Cape Town, working with **Professor Gaia Scerif**, University of Oxford, was awarded a Newton Advanced Fellowship which ran from 2015-17 to work on **Executive Function in South African Preschool Children from Low-Income Settings**.

This research has highlighted that preschool children in low-income South African settings have better than expected executive function. This project has helped to develop significant capacity in research into preschool children's cognitive development and school readiness. The implication of these findings is that these children have the cognitive capacity to learn, but that the school environment they enter into is not necessarily capitalising on this capacity in the poorest areas. But this does present an opportunity for these children's learning capacity to be maximised in order to set them on a better educational trajectory. By maximising children's educational trajectories, there is a better chance of also maximising their economic trajectories. This project facilitated an equitable and productive collaboration both with Prof Steven Howard at the University of Wollongong, Australia, and with Professor Scerif which has carried on beyond this project.

This project also supported the capacity building of an excellent PhD student, Caylee Cook, who is close to completion, and has already published some of the key findings of the project in *Developmental Science*.

Findings from the project have helped to influence the development of another initiative led by Dr Draper – the South African 24-hour movement behaviour guidelines for birth to five years which has involved numerous stakeholders, including NGO and government representatives.