The British Academy's Just Transitions Programme

Final report: Evaluation of two rapid response calls issued in 2021

Report commissioned by The British Academy

May 2024

Executive Summary

An evaluation of two schemes under the British Academy's Just Transitions programme

In 2021, the British Academy announced two calls for proposals under the Just Transitions Programme:

- Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally[1]; and
- Just Transitions to Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific region[2].

The calls were made with underpinning funding from the UK's Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, (now the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT)). The funding for these calls required the British Academy to issue these calls on a rapid response basis, which included (i) the rapid development of collaborative proposals and their assessment and (ii) from the award notification, a rapid project start-up and timeframe for delivery.

Activities under the Just Transitions Programme focus on raising awareness of the importance of the humanities and social sciences in understanding complex human and social dimensions to environmental challenges and their solutions. This evaluation focuses on the awards, impact and process associated with these specific Just Transitions calls for proposals.

About the projects included in this review

A total of 16 awards were within the scope of this review. Nine were awarded through the Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally call and seven were awarded through the Just Transitions to Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific region call. In one case on the Just Transitions to Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific region call, one PI on an awarded project did not wish to be contacted, leaving six projects open to the evaluation. Both calls enabled individual project awards of up to £100,000, with award values for Sectors and Industries projects ranging from £62,000 to £99,300[3].

Understanding the call requirements

Both calls focused on ensuring just transitions while tackling climate change, which the British Academy defines as "the existential challenge of our time". Both calls aimed to fund research that would explore the needs, impacts and implications of just transitions in diverse sectors, for diverse groups, that include diverse approaches to justice, and consider how to build capacities and capabilities for adaptation as well as mitigation. The Decarbonisation in the Asia Pacific projects focused closely on the action required in the Asia-Pacific region to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss, while Sectors and Industries projects focused specifically on action required in sectors and industries globally across supply and value chains.

It should be noted that elements of both calls were similar, in particular around expectations on how the research would be undertaken, the time frame against which evidence and policy recommendations should be positioned, and in terms of team composition.

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1 https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/programmes/just-transitions-within-sectors-and-industries-globally/

2 https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/programmes/just-transitions-to-decarbonisation-in-the-asia-pacific-region/

3 Award values for Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific Region were not available online.

For example, both specifications stated that, "the studies will undertake research, such as focus groups, surveys, and policy mapping that will be brought together into a set of recommendations for policymakers, communities, workers, business and the wider public." They also indicated the timeframe against which the evidence and policy recommendations should be positioned, stating, "the studies will focus on demonstrating the pinch-points and trade-offs faced in the next 20-30 years." Finally, the research teams supported by both calls were expected to have UK leadership and involvement from researchers (e.g. as co-investigators) based in the relevant overseas country. This is an important aspect of project delivery in a rapid response context.

Overview of the project methodology

This evaluation of two of the British Academy's Just Transitions calls addressed questions relating to **impact** (the outcomes and impacts from the programme) and **process** (how the schemes were delivered). This evaluation was undertaken between January and March 2024 via a mixed-method approach. Our project methodology featured:

- A **desk-based evidence review**, covering scheme-specific reports to identify expected and actual impact, and to develop logic models for each scheme.
- **One-to-one interviews** with eight Principal Investigators leading on successful awards.
- An **online survey** of 16 co-applicants on successful awards (representing institutions based in Australia, Cambodia, China, India, Malaysia and the United States), 14 unsuccessful applicants and two research office staff to gain additional insight on the impacts and process of project application and delivery.

Understanding impact discussed in this report

Research impact can be defined as "the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy"[3]. Within this, three types of impact can be considered: **instrumental impact** (e.g., influencing policy development, shaping legislation, changing behaviour); **conceptual impact** (e.g., contribution to our understanding of issues, reframing debates); and **capacity building** (e.g., technical and personal skill development).

As outlined above, the British Academy expected that "studies will focus on demonstrating the pinch-points and trade-offs faced in the next 20-30 years" and it should be acknowledged that the projects reviewed in this evaluation demonstrated evidence of instrumental impact, conceptual impact and capacity building.

The research conducted by funded academics has been incorporated into policy agendas

The research conducted by funded academics has been incorporated into the policy agendas of various stakeholders such as NGOs, third sector organisations, and industry partners. Researchers note that continued collaboration and networking with national and international organisations are perceived as valuable activities for advancing the agenda on various topics related to just transitions. Award holders also recognised the role that their projects had played in establishing communication channels with policymakers, which laid the critical foundations for future instrumental impacts.

Funded projects created or continued dialogues with local communities

This evaluation finds that funded researchers have also demonstrated capacity building and conceptual impact. Researchers have developed links with international policymaking organisations and funded projects played a critical role in initiating dialogues with local communities and amplifying the voices of marginalised or underrepresented groups in the context of climate research. We note that, in many cases, these dialogues are newly established, indicating that projects have laid the

groundwork for early phases of community engagement and collaboration that will likely require continued engagement to develop.

In all cases, projects involved community engagement within the local populations where research was focused. Participants of this review noted that their projects established vital communication channels and dialogues with local communities around the concept of just transitions. Continued networking with policymaking organisations is advancing the just transitions agenda.

There was clear evidence of the academic benefits from the awards and international collaborations supported through the programme

Participants were able to identify career and academic benefits from the programme awards. Of the eight PIs interviewed, all of them noted that journal articles or academic publications had been developed resulting from funded projects. 71% of survey respondents also referenced academic outputs arising from funded projects.

Funded projects helped to raise the profile and visibility of researchers in the areas where their research was conducted, leading to strong connections, networks and new collaborations. Four PIs indicated that they had secured funding from other organisations for related research. Co-investigators reported further academic collaborations, connections or research arising from projects, including new research proposals.

While the requirements of the calls were clear, some applicants found delivery of international research challenging within the allocated timeframe

The British Academy clearly communicated the submission and delivery timescales required as part of a rapid delivery timeframe. For the projects involved in this review, proposals were submitted to a 6th October deadline and were expected to start by 27th October 2021, following an award notification between these two dates. Project participants reported that a key challenge around project start-up was between award notification by the British Academy to the PI and their university, and the point of having all institutional approvals and agreements in place to enable the academic to begin delivering the work. The issues raised here are largely due to lengthy approvals processes within institutional research offices. The rapid timeline did not affect academics' willingness to engage in future calls on a similar basis.

Rapid project delivery allowed ECRs on short-term contracts to deliver complete projects

The rapid response basis for the call and project delivery was perceived as effective in relation to the career development of some early career researchers (ECRs). The condensed timeframe for project delivery was cited as beneficial to ECRs with short-term institutional contracts, as many of them were able to see through entire projects within these contracts. As a result, it was suggested that ECRs could move on to other posts and progress their careers. In one case, a Just Transitions award was evidenced as an instance of successful project delivery used in an application for promotion for a PI.

Policy reports published on the British Academy's website were perceived as valuable resources

Policy reports published on the British Academy's website were perceived as valuable resources to disseminate findings to both the communities that were engaged in the research and to those external to the projects such as other academics or members of the public. Participants to the review noted that these reports were cited by other academics in further research. The British Academy also translated reports into languages beyond English, which PIs noted was extremely valuable in order to broaden the reach of their project findings. In some cases, these reports generated further discussion on the research with academics internationally.

SHAPE perspectives are critical to exploring just transitions equitably

Through interviews with PIs conducted as part of this evaluation, the value of SHAPE perspectives in exploring just transitions was made clear. In particular, PIs emphasised the importance of understanding that definitions of just transitions in the West may differ from those in low-and middle-income countries. They also noted that SHAPE perspectives are critical to just transitions research as complex societal challenges require a deep understanding of local contexts, communities and social issues.

Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation makes a number of observations around lessons learned and recommendations for consideration. These include:

- for future rapid calls, recognise the challenges of the award to project start phase for PIs and their host institutions;
- consider how the project delivery phase can balance the need to defray the funds against delivery of reports and actions that enhance impact;
- continue to support the development of additional policy-orientated reporting from projects;
- consider approaches to provide more clarity to applicants around reporting requirements;
- continue to engage with institutional research offices, to understand their perspectives on the proposal development and submission stages; and
- recognise the challenges that call timeframes pose to project proposals and delivery for international researchers.

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1. Background and context

1. Background and context

1.1 Introduction

About the British Academy

The British Academy ("the Academy") is the national academy for humanities and social science in the UK. In this context, the Academy focuses its funding on Social Science, Humanities and the Arts for People and the Economy, otherwise referred to as SHAPE.

The Academy sees SHAPE research as vital to tackling the grand challenges of the 21st century as well as supporting the overall health, wellbeing and prosperity of the country. The Academy provides a range of grants for academic researchers both in the UK and internationally.

About the British Academy's Just Transitions Programme

In 2021, the British Academy launched the Just Transitions Programme. Activities under this Programme focus on raising awareness of the importance of the humanities and social sciences in understanding complex human and social dimensions to environmental challenges and their solutions.

This evaluation focuses on the awards, impact and process associated with two specific Just Transitions calls for proposals issued in 2021:

- Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally[4]; and
- Just Transitions to Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific region[5].

Both calls addressed the challenges of achieving a just transition whilst tackling climate change and biodiversity loss and ensuring social equity, inclusive economies and environmental sustainability. This involves defining what constitutes a just transition and determining how it should be designed and led, considering different societal and community perspectives.

Against both calls, it was expected that the studies would undertake research, such as focus groups, surveys, and policy mapping that would be brought together into a set of recommendations for policymakers, communities, workers, business and the wider public. The call required studies to focus on demonstrating the pinch-points and trade-offs faced in the next 20-30 years.

The call timescales for applications and delivery were similar and required a rapid delivery timeframe.

Both calls were issued on similar timescales (see Appendix A) and, importantly, required a rapid delivery timeframe for awards.

Following the submission deadline of 6th October 2021, delivery starting by 27th October was required, with final reports due by 25th March or 29th April 2022. The period between submission deadline (6th October) and project start (27th October) is distinctive when set against the experience of researchers and funder norms for calls.

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[4] https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/programmes/just-transitions-within-sectors-and-industries-globally/

[5] https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/programmes/just-transitions-to-decarbonisation-in-the-asia-pacific-region/

The timeline and specific dates for the submission and project delivery was clearly stated in the call guidance notes,[6] including the short period between proposal submission and expected project start dates, and the period for project delivery. The call guidance did not otherwise identify the call as specifically being distinctive in requiring a rapid response, or identifying the reasons for this (i.e. the underpinning DSIT funding).

The "Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific call" was a joint call with the Science and Innovation Network

The 'Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific' call stated that it was a joint call from the British Academy and the Science & Innovation Network (SIN), noting that SIN would have an involvement in selection of awards and that awards would be required to work with the Academy and SIN (e.g. to "pull the research into the policy making sphere"). Final reports were stated to be for the Academy and SIN. Contributors to our evaluation did not directly reference the involvement of the SIN, and we have not commented on this further in the report.

Aims of this evaluation

The British Academy commissioned Research Consulting to undertake the evaluation which had the following aims:

- to understand how well the Just Transitions scheme has met its objectives;
- to assess the Academy's application processes from the perspective of award holders, unsuccessful applicants and university research offices; and
- to understand and evidence the outcomes, impact and impacts-in-progress of studies.

Overview of research questions

This review aims to address a distinct set of research questions developed by the British Academy. The questions we have sought to answer as part of this work are presented below and grouped as to whether the questions relate to the impact, process or value of SHAPE sections of this report.

Impact	Section
• What is the qualitative and, where possible, quantitative evidence of the schemes' aims being met so far? It is acknowledged that some impacts may happen in the future. • To what extent have the programmes met to date the aim of generating rapid policy-oriented impact through researchers? • Were there wider outcomes and impacts from these programmes beyond the defined objectives?	• Section 2
Process	**Section**
• What are the award-holders' views of partaking in a rapid response funding call? • What have the award-holders learned from their experience? What would they take forward and what would they look to change if engaging in this type of call again? • What more could the British Academy do to support them through the process?	• Section 3 • Section 5
Value of SHAPE	**Section**
• What is the strength of SHAPE research in delivering evidence valuable to understanding Just Transitions in the contexts of the scope of the calls?	• Section 4

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[6] This refers to the ~20 page PDF "scheme notes for applicants" issued for each call.

| Structure of this report | This report is divided into the following sections: |

- **Section 1.** Background and context
- **Section 2.** Impact evaluation
- **Section 3.** Process evaluation
- **Section 4.** The value of SHAPE research
- **Section 5.** Conclusions and recommendations

| Limitations | The British Academy expected that "studies will focus on demonstrating the pinch-points and trade-offs faced in the next 20-30 years" and it should be noted that projects reviewed have demonstrated evidence of instrumental impact, conceptual impact and capacity building within the context of this long-term timeframe. |

The evaluation set out to engage all participants, including the lead academics and co-applicants on awards and the lead academics on unsuccessful proposals submitted to the call. Due to a combination of availability during the data gathering period and some declining to participate, (for example of the 16 PIs we hoped to interview, 1 person wished not to be contacted, 2 people declined to participate, 2 people were unavailable during the timeframe and 3 unable to be reached) we were not able to engage all participants.

We also sought to capture the views of research office staff who supported the application of proposals and management of successful awards. However, we wish to note the challenges faced in terms of engaging research offices due to significant turnover in staff managing the awards. The absence of key personnel hindered our ability to access staff to complete the online survey and a limited number of responses were therefore available for analysis.

| Acknowledgments | We gratefully acknowledge the support of the British Academy in the development of the review. The Academy were integral to identifying participants for this work and supporting the framing of the final report. We are grateful to the award holders, applicants and institutional staff that supported this review, as without their valuable insights this work would not have been possible. |

1.2 Approach and methodology

| Overview of the project methodology | This evaluation of two of the British Academy's Just Transitions calls was conducted via a mixed-methods approach. The evaluation work was undertaken between January and March 2024 and the methodology featured: |

- A **desk-based evidence review**, covering scheme-specific reports to identify expected and actual impact, and to develop logic models for each scheme (Appendix C). Here, application documentation from in-scope projects was reviewed and thematically coded in NVivo to highlight evidence impact and inform logic model development.
- **One-to-one interviews** with Principal Investigators leading on successful awards. Eight online interviews were conducted with PIs, following a semi-structured interview format lasting up to 60 minutes.
- An **online survey** of co-applicants on successful awards, unsuccessful applicants and research office staff to gain additional insight on the impacts and process (proposal

development, submission, start-up and delivery). Responses were collected anonymously via the online survey link shared with respondents.

About the projects included in this review

A total of 16 awards were granted under the two Just Transitions calls were in scope of this review. Nine were funded via the Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally call and seven were funded via the Just Transitions to Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific region call. Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific projects were delivered in partnership with the Science & Innovation Network. In total 40 individual stakeholders participated in the evaluation. Figure 1 below indicates the distribution of participants across the evaluation methodology.

Figure 1. Overview of participants in this evaluation
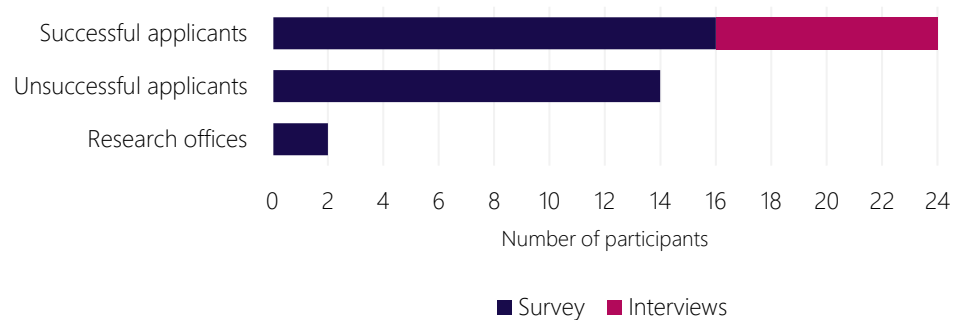
Approach to analysis

A thematic analysis of findings was conducted to draw out key messages for the final report. Findings from the thematic coding were synthesised to draw out key messages for reporting. The results of this exercise were presented to the British Academy as interim findings to agree on key messages for reporting before the present report was developed. Further details of the project approach and methodology can be found in Appendix B of this report.

2. Impact evaluation

2. Impact evaluation

This section answers the research questions related to **impact.** The questions considered are:

- What is the qualitative and, where possible, quantitative evidence of the schemes' aims being met so far? It is acknowledged that some impacts may happen in the future.
- To what extent have the programmes met to date the aim of generating rapid policy-oriented impact through researchers?
- Were there wider outcomes and impacts from these programmes beyond the defined objectives?

Overall, this evaluation has found qualitative evidence that scheme aims have been met, as all projects were able to evidence impact arising from funded research, including influencing policy or decision-making in a rapid context, establishing and sustaining stakeholder communication or networks, developing the understanding of issues around just transitions, and securing follow-on research. Wider impacts from programmes beyond the defined objectives were also captured, particularly in terms of the professional and career benefits to participating researchers.

2.1 Definitions of impact used in the report

Defining the types of impact expected and observed.

Research impact can be defined as "the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy"[7]. Within this, three types of impact can be considered: **instrumental impact** (e.g., influencing policy development, shaping legislation, changing behaviour); **conceptual impact** (e.g., contribution to our understanding of issues, reframing debates); and **capacity building** (e.g., technical and personal skill development). In terms of the projects involved in this review, the logic models presented in Appendix C anticipated the following examples of impact to be realised or supported by funded research.

- **Instrumental:** influencing policy or decision-making, establishing and sustaining stakeholder engagement or partnerships, developing networks, structures and roadmaps to secure just transitions
- **Conceptual:** developing and contributing to understanding of issues around just transitions, potential to apply learning to other contexts
- **Capacity building:** potential for follow-on research, researcher connections or collaborations, career-based impacts for researchers, academic publications or conference presentations

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[7] Source: https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/impact-toolkit-for-economic-and-social-sciences/defining-impact/ [Accessed 26 March 2024]

2.2 Summary of observed impacts

Understanding the
observed impacts

Table 1 below presents a summary of the impacts that have been identified as part of this evaluation and are discussed throughout the following sections of this report. Examples cover a breadth of impact areas from influencing policy or decision-making through to personal and career benefits. Impact is labelled as instrumental, conceptual or capacity building throughout the table.

Table 1. Summary of observed impacts.

Impact area and (type)	Summary of observed impacts
Influencing policy or decision-making (Instrumental)	• One PI indicated that their research was highly relevant to issues discussed at the COP (United Nations Climate Change Conference). • One project contributed evidence to a reform of health and safety law in the country in which the project was based. • Insights from a project were used to inform government in developing regulations to assess the social impact of new projects.
Establishing and sustaining stakeholder engagement, partnerships or networks (Instrumental)	• Workshop with ASEAN Centre for Energy involving government officials, utility providers and private sector stakeholders. • A large union had incorporated regular worker surveys across an expanded region to hear the voice of workers as a direct result of the project. • One PI held a webinar attended by the World Bank and the British Embassy in the country where their research was based. • One PI joined a roundtable at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. • A company in Japan joined a knowledge-sharing session with researchers to incorporate research insights into their business processes. • One project led to the formation of a Regional Studies Association network on Just Transitions. • One study was shared during the Pacific Energy Summit 2022 in Kuala Lumpur. • One project contributed insights to discussions on energy transitions in Australia hosted by the Sydney Environment Institute.
Developing and contributing to understanding of issues around just transitions (Conceptual)	• One PI indicated that the Just Transitions research had been a main cited resource for an influential Carbon Trust report and had been cited and used in academic literature by researchers in Japan and Malaysia. • One PI highlighted that research on energy transitions from fossil fuels to renewables was discussed on Channel 4 News. • Two PIs noted that their work contributed to articles published in national newspapers both in the UK and internationally. • Research contributed to understanding on decolonising just transitions.
Potential for follow-on research and researcher collaborations (Capacity building)	• Four of the eight PIs we interviewed explicitly stated that they had gone on to secure additional funding for related research. Funding amounts (where stated) ranged from £10k to £1m and represented a variety of different funders. One PI referred to further collaborations, but it was not stated whether this was funded. • One PI received £10,000 funding to continue research on climate change in the garment industry in Cambodia. • One PI received further funding from the British Council to pursue their research which was originally funded by the British Academy (amount not stated).

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	- One PI noted a further research collaboration with researchers in Malaysia and the ASEAN Centre for Energy.
Career-development opportunities for researchers (Capacity building)	- One PI indicated that they had cited the Just Transitions project on their successful promotion application and one PI cited the project on their application that is still under consideration. - One PI said that the British Academy grant provided their first opportunity to act as Principal Investigator on a grant and that it provided an opportunity for female researchers to lead on collaborative international research. - One PI stated that researchers supporting the British Academy funded project were able to secure employment following the project.
Academic publications or conference presentations (Capacity building)	- PIs interviewed across all projects published peer reviewed publications or book chapters resulting from the funded projects. 10 out of the 14 co-applicants also said they published academic outputs as a result of the funded research. - Researchers in Indonesia and the Philippines were able to attend regional conferences as well as researchers based in the UK. - Findings from a project were presented at the International Sustainability Transitions Conference.

2.3 Policy impacts observed

All projects achieved engagement with policymakers and established a dialogue

This evaluation finds that funded projects successfully created the conditions for policy engagement and catalysed further engagement with policymakers after the projects ended, thus laying the foundations for instrumental impact in terms of influencing future policy. By design, all projects included elements of engagement with policymakers in their delivery and/or as part of their outputs and dissemination activity. Typically, engagement with policymakers was achieved through scheduled meetings to present findings, deliver policy briefs or share recommendations, with all activities opening a dialogue between researchers and policymakers. In this context, PIs recognised the role that their projects had played in establishing communication channels with policymakers. In addition, many noted that this engagement laid the critical foundations for future policy impacts.

"We put together a group of policy advisors on our project, and they represent people that are either former policymakers, involved in policy directly, or in a research and engagement capacity. They were kept up to date and involved in the research in terms of looking at our findings and providing comments. They were also a part of the final workshop held in 2022."

- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

Continued networking with policymaking organisations is advancing the just transitions agenda

The research conducted by funded academics has been incorporated into the policy agendas of various stakeholders such as NGOs, third sector organisations, and industry partners. Primarily, researchers note that continued collaboration and networking with national and international organisations, such as the Natural Resources Institute, Unite, Trades Union Congress and Common Wealth are perceived as valuable activities for advancing the agenda on various topics related to just transitions.

Similarly, one PI noted that a health and safety law reform commenced in the country in which their project was based. While this reform was ongoing prior to the PI's project, the findings and recommendations from the Just Transitions project were submitted as evidence contributing to the reforms. Another PI noted that issues explored through their research were presented at high profile events such as COP by a representative of government. A third PI gave an example of direct involvement with policymakers which came about due to the connections made during the just transitions research programme.

"We're working with the Japanese government to develop regulations for them, assessing social impacts of new projects... I gave a knowledge sharing session in person when I went back to Tokyo last year, including with the company president. They are going to try and incorporate my insights into what they're drafting with the regulator in Japan and in their own company."

- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

Funded projects were able to enhance and initiate community engagement within local populations

In all cases, projects involved community engagement within the local populations where research was focused. Participants to this review noted that their projects established vital communication channels and dialogues with local communities around the concept of just transitions. For example, one PI highlighted that community engagement on the topic was essential to the success of the project. They noted that climate justice is typically perceived as an academic subject, but dialogues with local populations, through mechanisms like interviews and focus groups, helped to translate the concept into something comprehensible for local communities.

"Justice is very much an academic concept. When we explain it... and bring it down to elements of access, then citizens get it... So, notions of justice, and definitions regarding justice and energy access need to be adapted to the communities in which they're being studied."

- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

NGOs acted as mediators between communities and researchers, giving historically unheard stakeholders a voice

Several of the funded projects evaluated involved engagement with non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Typically, NGOs that mediated relationships between communities and government, as well as unions, civil societies and third sector organisations. For some PIs, dialogues and relationships with NGOs were perceived as powerful facilitators in amplifying the voices of the communities affected by just transitions. NGOs were also seen as bodies capable of providing leverage to influence policy. For example, as a result of one of the funded projects, a large union representing workers in the sector has embedded regular worker surveys in their engagement activities which has helped to enhance their existing work on just transitions:

"We've expanded the British Academy study, and we've now got comparative data from [a different region] and we were able to run a parallel survey through [a union] [...] they of

- Award holder (Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally)

Dialogues with local communities are in their early stages and will require continued engagement to sustain them

Relationships with NGOs and other groups within local communities were established as a result of funded projects. Often, PIs reported that NGOs absorbed the issues as an important agenda which would shape their approach going forward, and some were involved in follow-up research. However, while participants noted that these relationships amplified community voices, the ability of NGOs to effect tangible change in communities' lives is limited, particularly within the constraints of the project timeline.

"I think the communities feel very abandoned, and, in some senses, the continuation of the civil society, engagement with them is really, really important. But the civil society's ability to actually make any difference to their lives apart from hearing them and saying, we're talking about your stuff, it's not enormous."

- Award holder (Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally)

Barriers to influencing policy were identified relating to the policy agenda, timing issues and contextual matters

Some barriers to influencing policy were identified by participants of this evaluation. In particular, barriers related to the difficulty in penetrating existing policy agendas, the broader political context in which the projects were taking place, and issues relating to the short timeframe for delivery of the projects. The common barriers to influencing policy cited by participants are summarised in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Common barriers to realising policy impact cited by participants

The **level of maturity of the policy area** in the given contexts	Differing **degrees of openness to policy change** in some geographical areas and arms of government	Policymakers unwilling to accept policy recommendations if they were **at odds with other prevalent polices**
The **expected time lag** between completing projects and seeing impacts or outcomes	The **short timeframe of projects**, limiting the extent of stakeholder engagement	Global issues that affect **communities' perceptions** of the importance of just transitions

An example of the **level of maturity of the policy area** in given contexts as a potential barrier to policy impact was offered by one PI whose project covered two countries. In one, the policy agenda relating to the issues the project addressed was quite well-developed and therefore, it was felt, the research had greater opportunity to be influential, but the other country was some way behind in this area and it was felt that this left less scope for influencing the agenda and ultimately policy.

Another case provided an example of the barriers formed to influencing policy when **different branches of government within the same country have different priorities or attitudes** towards just transitions:

> *"Two parts of government are proceeding at the same time, and our work is being taken up by the side of government that wants it, and it is being somewhat ignored by the other side."*
>
> *- Award holder (Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally)*

2.4 Personal and professional impacts

Awards catalysed further research opportunities and collaborations

Funded projects have catalysed other opportunities such as securing further funding and establishing new research collaborations.

Four out of eight PIs explicitly highlighted that they had secured funding from other organisations for related or follow-up research projects. These were usually projects of a larger scale, but which explored the issues that were the subject of the British Academy's funded project in greater depth and/or in a different context. Funders of subsequent projects included, but were not limited to, British Council, Wellcome Trust, Ford Foundation, Common Wealth, and the Leverhulme Trust. Grant values ranged from £10k to £1m.

Through the online survey of co-applicants, three noted that they had secured additional funding on related topics. In two cases, further funding was received from Australian organisations – the Australian Department of Employment and the Australian National University Climate Change Institute. One respondent noted their further funding amounted to £35,000.

Funded projects enhanced the career development of early career and senior academics

The successful delivery of projects contributed to the career development of both early career researchers and established academics. One PI we interviewed had gone on to secure a further grant (of approximately £1m) for further research related to the Just Transitions project. They felt that the Just Transitions project had provided evidence of their ability to deliver international and collaborative projects and that the "momentum" from this had helped to secure the new funding. In addition, one co-applicant noted that their experience as a co-investigator on a funded project led to them securing a position as Principal Investigator on another grant. In one case, a Just Transitions award was evidenced as an instance of successful project delivery used in an application for promotion for a PI.

> *"To have experience as a co-investigator for a transnational funding collaboration improved my research portfolio and I was then able to secure new research grants as Principal Investigator"*
>
> *- Award holder (Online survey)*

The rapid response basis for the call may have particular benefits for some researchers

The rapid response nature of the call was reported to have opened up participation opportunities for some researchers, specific examples reported included female-led projects and participation of early career researchers (ECRs).

- A Principal Investigator noted that their project was led by two female academics, one based at a UK institution and the other in Malaysia. They saw this as a positive and distinctive feature enabled by the call. The collaboration enabled by the British Academy

funding had progressed into additional applications and collaborations for these two academics.

- The condensed timeframe for project delivery was cited as being beneficial to ECRs with short-term institutional contracts, as they were able to see through the entire project within their period of contracted employment. Short contracts can prevent ECRs from participating as investigators in programmes operating to longer delivery timeframes.

"[The co-investigator for this project is] one of the only female academics in her programme... but she's in a community and a research culture that is very male driven. When we were putting this project together, one thing that we both connected over was that two of the leads on the project were going to be women. I don't know that that is necessarily an impact that we can measure. But I do think that there is some sort of positive there."
- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

"We're not always looking for long running calls that are 24 or 12 months. As an ECR, a rapid call was actually the perfect length. At the stage I was at in my career, I was on a temporary contract, so it was not possible for me to apply to most longer running projects. This project fit within the temporary contract timeframe that I had. So it was perfect."
- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

2.5 Academic impacts

All projects resulted in journal articles or academic publications

Academic impacts were the most commonly cited impacts resulting from funded projects. For instance, projects typically resulted in at least one journal article (published or forthcoming) being released by researchers. This was highlighted both in interviews with Principal Investigators and through the online survey of 14 co-investigators.

Figure 3 below shows academic outputs as the primary form of impact following the completion of projects. Of the 14 co-investigators surveyed, 10 (71%) reported academic outputs such as journal articles and book chapters resulting from their projects. Six co-investigators (43%) reported sharing findings at conferences. Interviews with all eight PIs (100%) mentioned academics articles and conferences.

Figure 3. Outcomes reported by co-investigators (n = 14)

Outcomes reported by co-investigators (n = 14)

Valuable opportunities for presentations in local regions

Through the online survey, six funded researchers (43%) reported that they presented project findings at national and international conferences (Figure 3). This was also highlighted by all eight principal investigators interviewed, who noted conference presentations and posters resulting from projects. Through further discussion in interviews, and via comments in the online survey, our study found that the opportunity for conference presentation was beneficial, both in terms of raising the profile of research through international dissemination activities and in terms of personal and professional development for researchers. One PI collaborated with another university also working in the just transitions field because they had seen the research they had done on British Academy funded project.

"[Another university] asked me to be part of their project. I'm pretty sure they wouldn't have asked me to do that had I not done the [Just Transitions] project, because they wouldn't have even known that I was interested in that as an area."

- Award holder (Just Transitions in Sectors and Industries Globally)

Networking and collaboration opportunities were supported by projects

Funded projects helped to raise the profile and visibility of researchers in the areas where their research was conducted, leading to strong connections, networks and new collaborations. One PI said that their research helped to gather momentum for the topic of just transitions, leading on to work with academics, NGOs and other organisations.

"It's become a kind of ongoing, quite well-funded research stream."

- Award holder (Just Transitions in Sectors and Industries Globally)

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3. Process evaluation

3. Process evaluation

This evaluation considers the application phase and delivery and dissemination phases for funded projects

This evaluation addressed both the application and delivery elements of the British Academy's Just Transitions calls, considering applicant views (successful and unsuccessful) and the award-holders' experiences of project delivery. The evaluation sought to identify features and lessons learned to inform any future rapid response calls by the British Academy. In section 2.1 we described the timelines and contexts for the rapid response call and noted that these were set out in detail in the scheme notes for applicants.

This section explored the following research questions:

- What are the award-holders' views of partaking in a rapid response funding call?
- What have the award-holders learned from their experience? What would they take forward and what would they look to change if engaging in this type of call again?

The section covers the experience of applicants to the point of submission, the experience of award holders (PIs and Co-Is) in starting and delivering their project, perspectives of the award holders on the dissemination of research findings and pers.

3.1 Proposal development and submission

Most award holders and unsuccessful applicants would apply for another British Academy grant through a rapid call

Positively, when asked the majority of applicants, successful and unsuccessful, would apply to a future call issued on a rapid response basis. But a proportion, typically ~20% of PIs, Co-Is and unsuccessful PIs did indicate that they would not or may not apply to a future call issued on a rapid response basis.

Existing relationships supported the timely development of applications

The review identifies four enablers to proposal development against the call, emerging from discussions with the award-holding principal investigators (Figure 4). The call scheme guidance notes anticipated these to an extent, noting that "applications are likely to build on existing or ongoing research". It is not known to what extent this aspect was considered in the decision process.
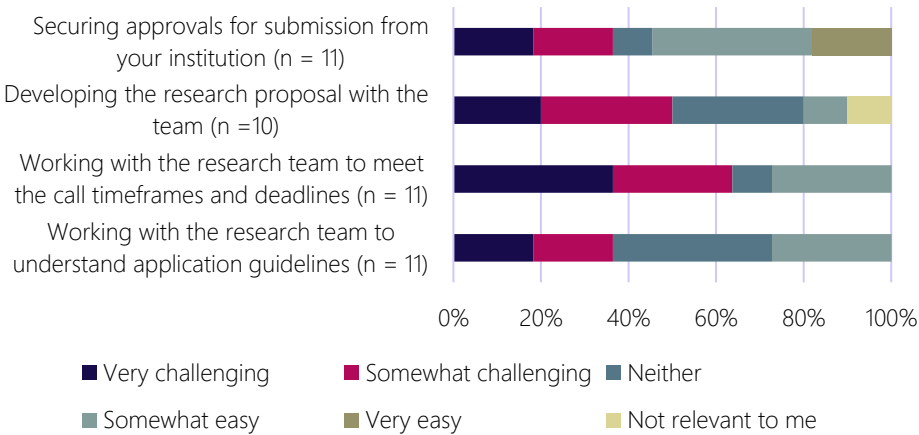
Figure 4 illustrates common enablers to proposal development discussed during interviews with eight PIs. While the application process was challenging due to the speed at which proposals had to be developed, for academics, some common factors enabled the development of proposals within the required timeframes (Figure 4). Primarily, in cases where there were existing relationships either internally (with academic researchers) or externally (with industry or policymaking partners), applicants were able to develop strong proposals within the allotted timeframe.

Whilst limited, the responses from researchers indicated that the relative scale of the award to the institution (in comparison to their wider landscape of research funding and contracts), was also a factor in being able to accelerate internal processes and approvals. This is discussed further in section 3.2 as it particularly relates to the award to project start phase.

Figure 4. Common enablers to proposal development noted by award holders

Ideas for projects were formed prior to the call	**Strong teams or networks of academics** were already established
Relationships with external stakeholders were already established	The **size of the award was significant** for the institutional research office

Figure 5. Unsuccessful applicant views of proposal submission

Securing approvals for submission from your institution (n = 11)

Developing the research proposal with the team (n =10)

Working with the research team to meet the call timeframes and deadlines (n = 11)

Working with the research team to understand application guidelines (n = 11)

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Very challenging ■ Somewhat challenging ■ Neither
■ Somewhat easy ■ Very easy ■ Not relevant to me

Working with the project research team to meet the call submission deadline was indicated as the most challenging aspect

In terms of the necessary preparations to make a submission to the call, participants indicated that working with the research team (who were typically from a range of countries and time zones) was the most challenging aspect.

This was most notable for the (international) co-applicants on successful awards, where 11 out of 14 respondents (79%) stated that meeting the deadline for proposal submission was somewhat or very challenging. Similarly, 7 of 11 unsuccessful applicants responding to this question (64%) said that meeting the call deadline was somewhat or very challenging.

A few researchers expressed strong views on the timescales

It is important to note that we also observed a small number of free text responses from researchers that indicated particularly strong views about the application (and more so the delivery) timescale. These included successful award holders and were most acutely observed for the (generally overseas) co-investigators.

We note the wider landscape of activity and discussion (funders and researchers) relating to research culture and minimising the burden of research (particularly unsuccessful) applications on researchers. For example, the Independent Review of Research Bureaucracy, published in 2022 states, "the design of application forms and review processes should focus primarily on the information needed to make a funding decision.[8]

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[8] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62e234da8fa8f5033275fc32/independent-review-research-bureaucracy-final-report.pdf

Participant suggestions for improvements that could support future rapid response calls to the point of submission were limited

Participants were invited to identify areas where improvements might have been made to improve their experience with the call and project delivery. Generally these related to the timescale, which we understand to have been 'fixed' because of the underlying DSIT funding but which was not evident to applicants. The strong views expressed on the rapid response timescale may have softened had they understood that this timescale was not a choice by the British Academy.

One suggested that the initial burden of information at application stage might be lessened as they felt that information was asked for that would only be relevant if the application was successful. They felt that the application itself could have omitted this information and that it could have been collected from those selected for awards after the decision had been made. We note that this is an ongoing consideration for funders across the UK. In this case we recognise that it would have been difficult due to the need for a rapid start-up of awards, following the selection decision.

3.2 From award notification to project delivery

Accelerated timelines with short award notification lead times

In section 2.1 we described the timelines and contexts for the rapid response call and noted that these were set out in detail in the scheme notes for applicants. Features of the call and wider circumstances at this time are relevant in considering the process evaluation and experience of applicants and award holders from the point of award notification and into project delivery. In particular these include:

- these were projects configured as international collaborations, with delivery by local researchers in overseas locations, requiring the lead university to implement agreements and contracts to facilitate this;
- the timeline between award notification and expected project start was short, at just 15 working days; and
- the wider landscape of research in 2021, where significant efforts were being made within universities to prioritise the rapid start of COVID related research, set against the (unprecedented) funder and policy priorities prevailing.

These factors particularly affected the researchers' ability to get their projects started effectively in the UK <u>and</u> in their international partner locations.

Researchers felt that institutional research offices were not set up to respond to rapid calls which delayed project progress

An important factor is the cascade of processes from the announcement of the award through to all partners having the contracts, funding and approvals in place to commence work. For a typical UK university the research office processes and norms would not normally deliver project starts to this timeframe (noting also that those approving submission of a proposal are not necessarily the same teams facilitating contracts). International projects also bring additional due diligence obligations on research office teams, which take further time. There are then processes with the overseas institution to agree contracts and their subsequent approvals to enable the researcher to access the

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project funding. One representative of an institutional research office responded to the online survey, stating that they strongly agree that funds were received from the British Academy in a timely manner, that contracting with the British Academy was simple, and that there was enough time to agree sub-contracts with collaborating partners.

Is some cases PIs were able to request the prioritisation of the British Academy project to accelerate this process. But, set in the wider context of priorities research offices were operating against in view of the COVID research landscape, this was not always possible.

This led to particular problems for co-investigators starting work in the partner country locations

For researchers, it was clear that this process, considering the end-to-end cascade of institutional processes, approvals and permissions, presented significant challenges for those leading activity in the partner countries. This most acutely affected the timely starting of work.

Unusually for an evaluation of this type, we saw a small number of strongly worded additional comments from Co-invetigators relating to this issue. In one instance, a survey respondent noted that they had significant ethical concerns at having to hire their research team and start the research prior to having any funds with which to pay them.

"I think that funders, like the British Academy [...] could try to impress on universities, that universities are very slow, very bureaucratic; things don't move quickly. And whether it's some kind of pressure can come from the funders just to say, look, we're not putting things in at very short notice by choice, these opportunities come and do arise very quickly, we'd encourage you to expedite the processes if you can."
- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

"Most universities are not geared to that kind of quick response mode. When we submitted the proposal, we had to get special permission to go through this because of the 21-day timeline that normal universities follow. We could not follow that, so we had to go outside and, it [required] some adjustments."
- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

Project delivery under the rapid timeline was challenging for award holders

Undertaking project work according to the delivery timescales was challenging for both principal and co-investigators. 100% of respondents to the online survey (14 co-investigators) said that project delivery under the rapid timeline was either somewhat or very challenging. Of these, 36% found delivery very challenging.

Both through interviews and the survey of award holders, researchers expressed a view that the delivery timeline had limited the potential for impact from projects. Award holders suggested an additional one to six months for project delivery may have led to more substantial project impacts.

Researchers adopted pragmatic approaches to the delivery arrangements in recognition of the timelines

Researchers indicated that they made pragmatic decisions on the selection of partners given the delivery timescales and tended to work with those with whom they already had relationships. This meant that opportunities to include new, and (possibly better placed) partners, tended to be discounted. One PI summarised this as having "oriented the choices we made" but did not consider it had materially affected the project delivery.

The project delivery period was also subject to disruption from COVID. We did not receive any evidence that suggested that COVID had severely disrupted project delivery to an extent that could not be resolved. Primarily, this was because COVID was a known issue during the project and proposal development phase, allowing researchers to design in measures to mitigate this.

The project delivery phase was not well-aligned with academic calendars in the global south

For some researchers, in some countries, the delivery period also fell during periods when research activity and participatory work was particularly difficult. The tight delivery timeline made this more acute as they struggled to mitigate the impact of this. Again, we note that the British Academy's timeline for delivery was very clear, and so such issues could be considered by applicants before a proposal.

Several PIs described during their interviews the impact on timelines of the project delivery period covering Christmas and this was also raised by a survey respondent. Many of the countries and cultures that the projects were based in have extended breaks over Christmas, for example, Nigeria, and this severely impeded the fieldwork for some. Their view was that future rapid calls on topics that are international in their nature should take into consideration national and cultural issues such as holidays and religious observance periods.

Comments from researchers also indicate that they did not understand why the call and project delivery were 'rapid'. It is possible that they may have assumed more leniency in delivery timeframes than was possible. One researcher suggested that, whilst recognising the need for the expenditure of the funds to the required timescale, more time could have been allowed for reporting or dissemination work.

information about why the call was so rapid and what/to whom the information generated would be shared. As a participatory researcher, I felt ethically compromised throughout the process."

- Award holder (Online survey)

3.3 Dissemination of project outputs

Reports published by the British Academy are valuable resources to disseminate findings

Policy reports published on the British Academy's website were perceived as valuable resources to disseminate findings to both the communities that were engaged in the research and to those external to the projects such as other academics or members of the public. Participants to the review noted that these reports were cited by other academics in further research.

Translation of some reports into other languages was welcomed

The British Academy also translated selected reports into languages beyond English, which PIs noted was extremely valuable in order to broaden the reach of their project findings. In one case, these reports generated further discussion on the research with academics internationally.

"The report is online [via the British Academy website] in different languages and many people download that report. Researchers from think tanks in Europe, China and Korea contacted me about the outputs from this project and I talked to them via email to share the findings of our research. I think that's social impact, rather than policy impact."

- Award Holder (Online survey)

Greater flexibility with the reporting outputs was needed

For some award holders it was necessary to be writing summary reports before fieldwork had been completed. Others reported needing to request short extensions to the report deadlines. Greater flexibility around reporting and project delivery was suggested by award holders, including the timing of reports and the format of final reports (some felt that their work was not suited to the required template).

The purpose of project outputs and associated responsibilities were unclear to award holders

For both Decarbonisation in the Asia Pacific and Sectors and Industries projects, call documentation states that award holders should produce a detailed project report at the end of their funded project. In addition to the call documentation, it is understood that the British Academy also advised researchers that the Academy would circulate the reports and would encourage award holders to share it via their own networks.

However, in the case of Sectors and Industries projects, two award holders noted that they were unclear on the dissemination process around final reports. One suggested that "more clarity" around how reports would be used and promoted would be welcome. Another PI interviewed felt that an event such as a symposium or conference could have been held to "launch" the publication of the reports and that this might have helped to gather and sustain momentum around the projects.

Researcher perceptions of the additional engagement activities

For both calls the call documentation stated that award holders should "participate in a series of dissemination and outreach workshops on the findings". All of the principal investigators that were interviewed on Sectors and Industries projects (four PIs out of nine that were invited) noted that an online event, during which teams presented their projects to each other, added to researcher workload and drew focus away from completing their research projects. It is acknowledged that this feedback came from Sectors and Industries PIs only, and this concern was not raised by researchers on Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific projects.

The evaluators have not been provided with a full list of all the engagement activities planned and held and so cannot comment further on participation or the feedback from academics at the time.

3.4 Support from the British Academy

The support offered by the British Academy team was praised

PIs expressed appreciation of the support, help and advice offered by members of the British Academy team during the project delivery period. For example, it was highlighted that the British Academy had been particularly supportive around the reporting stage while others praised the support received throughout. Among respondents to surveys for both successful applicants and research offices, all who had contact with the British Academy rated the responses as helpful.

4. The value of SHAPE research

4. The value of SHAPE research

About this section

The concept of "just transitions" refers to the idea that as societies transition towards more sustainable and low-carbon economies, the process should be fair and equitable for all stakeholders involved, particularly workers and communities that may be negatively impacted by the changes. This section discusses the perceptions of project participants in relation to the value of SHAPE research in just transitions contexts and seeks to answer the research question:

- What is the strength of SHAPE research in delivering evidence valuable to understanding Just Transitions in the contexts of the scope of the calls?

There is significant value in conducting just transitions research through the lens of SHAPE disciplines

The value of conducting just transitions research from the perspective of SHAPE disciplines was broadly recognised by participants of this review. Interviewees noted that concepts related to just transitions, such as climate change and net-zero, are typically explored through STEM perspectives which tend to focus on specific issues or solutions. However, interviewees noted the complexity of just transitions requires SHAPE perspectives and approaches to explore issues, as well as some elements of interdisciplinary collaboration. In this context, award holders did not dismiss the role of STEM perspectives on just transitions, rather they suggested that SHAPE should work alongside this to present a more holistic view of 'wicked problems' like climate change and decarbonisation.

"It's absolutely vital to understand the human questions affecting just transitions, otherwise it's too easily rendered down to efficiency questions or numerical questions."

- Award holder (Just Transitions in Sectors and Industries Globally)

Engagement with communities is critical to just transitions research

From a SHAPE perspective, the ambiguity surrounding concepts like just transitions necessitates consideration of broader socio-cultural dimensions, including law, philosophy, anthropology, and cultural knowledge. Interviewees suggested that this holistic approach is crucial for ensuring that transitions deemed just in one context do not inadvertently cause injustice elsewhere. Participants emphasised the importance of understanding that definitions of just transitions in the West may differ from those in low- and middle-income countries.

"I think the SHAPE perspective is important because there are vital issues here around transformation at a national, regional and global level and there is ambiguity around the notion of transition, as people may have different interpretations."

- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

Just transitions research is an opportunity for

The significance of the Just Transitions programme to interdisciplinary researchers was highlighted by award holders. Researchers engaged in the review represented a range of backgrounds including just transitions, energy policy, political economy, energy

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interdisciplinary researchers

governance, climate change adaptation, environmental risk, low-carbon innovation, and applied energy research in developing countries. Interviewees noted that the awards provide rare opportunities for those with interdisciplinary backgrounds or within interdisciplinary institutions. One award holder stated that other funders, such as UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), often cater to specific disciplines, potentially excluding researchers with interdisciplinary expertise, while calls such as Just Transitions provide a needed space for applied interdisciplinary research.

"Seeing calls like this is really good, particularly for researchers like me, who are quite interdisciplinary... Having something that's quite applied like this is also really good for institutions that are quite interdisciplinary. Otherwise we might struggle with traditional calls from funders like UKRI that tend to be very discipline specific... Having calls that bring interdisciplinary expertise together in an applied way is really good."

- Award holder (Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific)

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5. Conclusions and recommendations

5. Conclusions and recommendations

About this section

This section summarises the conclusions arising from the evaluation.

A strong set of outcomes and indicators of impact have been evidenced against issues of global significance

Overall the programme has delivered a portfolio of international collaboration projects that report a strong set of outcomes and indicators of impact against issues of global significance. This portfolio has delivered:

- new collaborations between UK-based and international researchers across many countries;
- facilitated local research and community engagement to inform just transitions in selected areas
- enabled researchers to engage policymakers, communities and other stakeholder organisations
- produced outcomes that are valued by the participating researchers and partners, leading to examples of continuation and further development, which are anticipated to lead to additional future impact.

A range of impacts from the programme were achieved including instrumental, conceptual and capacity building impact

This evaluation finds that funded projects successfully created the conditions for policy engagement and catalysed further engagement with policymakers after the projects ended, thus laying the foundations for instrumental impact in terms of influencing future policy. The research conducted by funded academics has been incorporated into the policy agendas of various stakeholders such as NGOs, third sector organisations, and industry partners. Funded projects were also able to enhance and initiate community engagement within local populations.

Lessons learned from the 'rapid response' programme delivery are important to ensuring future calls are well received and effective.

The process evaluation indicates that researchers found aspects of the proposal and project delivery timeline challenging. This is amplified by the international context for these projects and nature of the research being undertaken (community engaged, participatory).

Researchers may not have fully understood the reasons for the rapid response timeline, and some perceived this as a choice by the British Academy.

A significant challenge to the timelines for these two calls exists in the 15 working day period between award notification and project start. This is outside the control of most researchers and the international collaborations and movement of funds necessitate a range of processes and approvals firstly within the UK universities and then with each participating overseas university. Researchers expressed strong views on the impact of this and how it affected local delivery which we consider to be a reputational risk the British Academy should be aware of in any future calls.

We recommend that the British Academy continues to engage institutional research offices in its evaluation activities, to ensure an understanding of timelines for securing full agreements and transfer of funds on international collaborative projects.

Where there are funding or expenditure led restrictions for future rapid response calls, one beneficial flexibility that researchers would welcome may be around extending

reporting deadlines beyond the hard deadline for expenditure on the project. This may also enhance the potential for actions linked to enhancing impact from the work.

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Appendix A. Background to the programme calls

The following tables summarise the common and distinctive features of the two calls for proposals in terms of the process and call scope/focus.

Process, delivery arrangements and timelines

	Just Transitions Programme	
	Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific	Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally
Common features	Underpinning funding from the UK's Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.	
	Announcement of both calls in ~August 2021	
	Submission deadline of 6th October 2021	
	Following award confirmation, a requirement for a rapid start to the project by 27th October.	
	A maximum project value of £100,000, over five months, with awarded projects indicating award values between £62k and £100k;	
	Typically, the researcher teams comprised 3-4 researchers, led by UK-based academics, and involved at least one international researcher linked to the relevant location for the project (e.g. US, India, Australia, Cambodia, G7 countries).	
Distinctive features	Delivered with the Science & Innovation Network	No other delivery partners indicated
	7 awarded projects	9 awarded projects
	Final report to BA and SIN due 25 March 2022	Final report due to BA 29 April 2022

Scope and aims

	Just Transitions Programme	
	Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific	Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally
Scope	This call focuses specifically on the action required in the Asia-Pacific to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss, to identify the potential disruption and opportunity of decarbonising economies and societies, and to recommend options and pathways for communities, workers, businesses, policymakers and the wider public. We are keen to support research that examines how to apply Just Transition principles to decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific region as a whole, and China, India, Australia and Japan specifically.	This call focuses specifically on action required in sectors and industries globally across supply and value chains. The call does not prescribe which sector or industry should be the focus of the application, however, we expect the focus to be on key economic emitters or areas of society that will help reduce and/or eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.
Focus	A key focus of the award will be creating the connection to pull high quality research into the policymaking sphere in collaboration with SIN and British Academy.	A key focus of the award will be creating the connection to pull high quality research into the policymaking sphere in collaboration with the Academy.

Activities	"The studies will undertake research, such as focus groups, surveys, and policy mapping that will be brought together into a set of recommendations for policymakers, communities, workers, business and the wider public. The studies will focus on demonstrating the pinch-points and trade-off s faced in the next 20-30 years.
Just Transitions Programme Aims	Climate change is the existential challenge of our time. Ensuring just transitions whilst tackling climate change and biodiversity loss is key to supporting inclusive economies and societies in the future. Evidence from the social sciences and humanities is critical to supporting just transitions and how we can shape a positive future locally, nationally and globally. A just transition will seek to ensure the involvement of all relevant actors and that the benefits of decarbonisation are shared widely but also support those who stand to lose. Through this call, we are looking to support awards that engage in exploring the needs, impacts and implications of just transitions in diverse sectors, for diverse groups, that include diverse approaches to justice, and consider how to build capacities and capabilities for adaptation as well as mitigation. While a just transition has significant environmental considerations, it is also shaped by other structural changes, particularly in relation to the future of work and support for new jobs, sectors, skills and investments as set out in the Solidarity and Just Transition Silesia Declaration, and gender such as through the UNFCC Gender Action Plan. Therefore, helping address the social and economic effects of decarbonisation will be key to a just transition. This is particularly the case in a region such as the Asia-Pacific where more than 60% of the world's workers live but there is also significant variation in employment structures that pose unique challenges to driving environmental sustainability in a socially just manner. In addition, Asia and the Pacific is responsible for more than half of global greenhouse gas emissions and roughly 80% of the growth in coal demand is expected to come from Asia. Action to support a just transition in this region is essential to meet global goals such as the Paris Agreement, as well as regional, national and local priorities.

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Appendix B. Detailed methodology

Interviews with successful applicants

A total of 8 interviews were completed with Principal Investigators as part of this evaluation (4 on Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally and 4 on Just Transitions to Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific region.) Interviewees across both schemes were asked about the impacts arising as a result of funded research, their experience of the application and project delivery process and their thoughts on the value of SHAPE in addressing issues relating to just transitions.

Online surveys

Three online surveys were designed and launched to support this evaluation. The surveys were completed by 16 named co-applicants on successful awards, 14 unsuccessful applicants to the in-scope Just Transitions schemes and 2 research offices that supported the application and management of successful awards equating to a total of 32 responses. The surveys captured anonymous insights on impact and process from the perspective of co-applicants, an indication of impact generated through alternative funding sources from unsuccessful applicants, as well as their views on the application process, and views on the application process according to research office staff.

Analysis and reporting

A thematic analysis of findings was conducted to draw out key messages for the final report. All interview transcripts and qualitative survey responses were thematically coded, corresponding to the research questions for review. For questions and qualitative data relating to impact, a typology of impact was used to categorise findings into social, political, personal and professional, and academic impact. Findings from the thematic coding were synthesised to draw out key messages for reporting. The results of this exercise were presented to the British Academy through as interim findings before the present report was developed.

Appendix C. Scheme-level logic models

The logic models developed for each scheme are shown below.

Just Transitions within Sectors and Industries Globally

The nine projects within this theme engage in exploring the needs, impacts, and implications of Just Transitions in diverse sectors, for diverse groups, and include diverse approaches to justice. They also consider how to build capacities and capabilities for climate change adaptation as well as mitigation.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	
Just Transitions research awards in 2021, funded by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy. Nine awards were made with applicants able to apply for up to £100k. **Needs:** Issues affecting Just Transitions in certain sectors and industries which are contributing to and/or having to adapt to climate change, for example: • The tensions between adapting to climate change while securing workers' rights and livelihoods. • The challenges inherent in adapting to climate change in regions affected by conflict, poverty, human rights issues, etc. • Adapting to climate change in industries and sectors crucial to economies • Historically poor partnerships between stakeholders	The funds were awarded to ten different teams led by researchers in UK higher education institutions with many involving institutional partners / affiliates (the maximum number of institutional affiliations for any project was 10). Award values ranged from £99,000 to £62,000. Most projects adopted mixed methods approaches, most commonly two or more of the following: • Interviews • Focus groups • Workshops • Surveys • Literature reviews / evidence syntheses • Secondary data analysis / analysis of existing data or information • Community engagement / consultations	All projects resulted in the minimum specified reporting which was a condition of the funding, but most also detailed other outputs including: • Data (usually shared in anonymised form on academic open access platforms) • Academic papers / journal publications • Reports / books / book chapters • Media engagement • Conferences / workshops • Policy briefs • Social media channels / posts • Project-specific websites or blogs • MOOCs / educational resources • Establishing stakeholder networks / partnerships / panels	**Short-term** • Sharing information / contribution to knowledge • Foundations for further research • Stakeholders as active participants (including previously unengaged groups) • Policy recommendations	**Long-term** • Connections, networks and partnerships • Career-based gains for researchers • Contributions to policy-making • Sustained stakeholder engagement and commitment

Impacts

Intended impacts:
- Understanding of linkages between local, national and global issues to help support Just Transitions
- Giving a voice to under- / unrepresented stakeholders
- Identifying frameworks and structures for future engagement with and representation of stakeholders
- Potential for influencing policy
- Potential for replication of methodology for understanding just transitions in other sectors, industries, regions, etc.
- Identifying vulnerabilities in industries / economies related to climate change adaptations which might then serve to avoid / minimise the impact of the transition

Just Transitions to Decarbonisation in the Asia-Pacific Region

Seven research projects were awarded in November 2021, building on the Academy's work related to Just Transitions and COP26. However, for the purpose of this review, six are in scope. These projects aimed to engage in exploring the needs, impacts, and implications of just transitions in diverse sectors, for diverse groups, that include diverse approaches to justice. They also consider how to build capacities and capabilities for adaptation as well as mitigation. These projects were funded by the UK's Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	
Seven projects were awarded in November 2021 with applicants able to apply for up to £100k. Partnership and engagement with the UK Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy **Science & Innovation Network** (SIN) supported these grants. Issues affecting Just Transitions included: • Ensuring the costs of just transitions are borne equitably across groups. • Ensuring the voices of underrepresented groups can be heard in developing climate policy. • Acknowledging historically poor partnerships between stakeholders	The funds were awarded to seven different teams led by researchers in UK higher education institutions with many involving institutional partners. Award values ranged from upwards of £90,000 to £49,000. Most projects adopted mixed methods approaches, most commonly two or more of the following: • Interviews • Focus groups • Workshops • Surveys • Literature reviews / evidence syntheses • Secondary data analysis / analysis of existing data or information • Community engagement / consultations • Development of policy briefs for sharing with participants • Development of final report for funders (March 2022)	All projects resulted in the minimum specified reporting which was a condition of the funding, but most also detailed other outputs including: • **Final report** to British Academy and Science and Innovation Network • Publication of **journal articles** • Publication of **book chapters** • Publication of **news articles** • Presentations at national and international **conferences** • **Websites and blog posts** hosting information on projects • **Policy briefs** shared with relevant policymakers • Evidence-based **recommendations** to policymakers	**Short-term** • **Engagement with policymakers** to discuss research findings • **Information sharing** with local organisations and institutions	**Long-term** • **Research collaborations** with other researchers • Partnerships with local **research institutions** • Partnerships with **industry** across sectors • Development of **roadmaps** for just transitions

Impacts

- Progressive climate politics with **equitably distributed** costs and benefits
- Realising global and regional **climate targets**
- Understanding that **bottom-up** societal changes drive just transitions
- Greater recognition of the **role of indigenous people** in catalysing societal change

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