

# INTRODUCING THE CCG CATALYST FACILITY



## LET'S EMPOWER RESEARCH EXCELLENCE TOGETHER



"The views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies."

## About CCG – the organisation behind the Catalyst Facility

CCG is a pioneering UK Aid-funded project which aims to support investment in sustainable energy and transport systems to meet development priorities in the Global South. The programme brings together some of the UK's leading universities including UCL, Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College and the Open University, with the Centre for Global Equality, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sustain 2030, and Climate Parliament. It is directed from the Centre for Sustainable Transitions: Energy, Environment, and Resilience (STEER), at Loughborough University. Our team includes experts in practical, applicable research in sustainable development and related topics.

In just two years, we have achieved credibility with UK and international governments, with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, IEA, IAEA and numerous other leading organisations. This is because of our unique approach and our ethos.

Put simply, we support LMICs in the Global South to create investment cases that will attract vital climate finance and funding for their clean energy infrastructure plans.

Our strategy is based on partnership and collaboration. This means that we work with countries, empowering them to make their own decisions on energy policy and the infrastructure projects for which they wish to attract climate finance investment. In our model, we always work with both a university and a government partner in-country. Our goal is to develop and embed skills in energy modelling and analysis locally, to sustain this for the future. That is why we have developed a range of open-source tools, models and datasets as global public goods, available to all countries.

We believe that our approach is unique, groundbreaking and a genuinely impactful response to the climate crisis.



## Building on Early Success

Supported by its partners, CCG has established itself as a leading provider of capacity building, which empowers policymakers and academics in the Global South with the system modelling skills needed to develop locally owned and nationally grounded climate transition plans. CCG modelling tools follow the **Data-to-Deal** framework, meaning that they provide the analytics needed to support each stage of a clean energy project, from demand projections, through to system planning, development of financing strategies and securing project finance.

- With the **OpenLearn Collection**, CCG has achieved more than 80,000 downloads worldwide of its high-quality self-administered training materials. These cover more than 10 different energy modelling tools developed by leading edge universities and international organisations.
- Through **Summer Schools and the Energy Modelling Platform**, CCG and its partners in the *Optimus Community* provide in-depth face-to-face training for hundreds of influential academics and mid-career professionals across

the developing world using accessible open-source technical tools.

CCG capacity building programmes are highly rated by students, and some have even returned as the next generation of trainers. Several leading international organisations, such as the World Bank and the International Energy Agency, have demonstrated their confidence in the quality of CCG's training programmes by sponsoring students and integrating the training activities into their own capacity building programmes.

Yet – however successful – these efforts fall well short of the scale of demand for skills in Low- and Middle-Income countries, as well as the pressing need to equip countries to plan for the climate transition. For every professional that CCG trains, another suitable candidate is turned away due to space and funding constraints. Moreover, there is a need to broaden the reach of capacity building beyond mid-career professionals to encompass current graduate students who will provide the next generation of modellers and analysts.

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## Scaling to the Next Level

To meet the needs of the future, CCG wishes to take its capacity building efforts to a bigger scale by embarking on a new delivery model that will permit a much faster, wider and even more cost-effective delivery of services.

Under its new 'Flatpack' programme, CCG will adapt its student-facing training materials to create teaching kits that empower universities in the Global South to run their own graduate courses that flexibly mix and match the most

relevant modules from the full suite of modelling tools available from CCG.

By working in partnership with local universities, CCG materials can be institutionally embedded to provide a sustainable long-term capacity building ecosystem in each participating country. To make this possible, CCG will support the design and implementation of graduate courses by offering a menu of teaching materials, supporting the professional development of the academics and providing scholarships to enrolling students.

## Introducing the Catalyst Facility

To enable these partnerships with educational institutions based in low- and middle-income countries, CCG is launching the Catalyst Facility. The Facility will embed local self-sustaining knowledge generation systems, allowing for the co-creation of an ecosystem of support and creating the necessary enabling environment. This

will include the provision of targeted instruments to strategically empower researchers – and institutions – in the Global South. With a strategic focus on promoting collaborative learning and research, the Facility will catalyse impactful, autonomous research and produce a steady stream of graduate experts.

## Our Objectives

- Create a sustainable graduate teaching business model on which to strengthen universities from the Global South with support from leading hubs.
- Nurture world class, locally based students capable of developing nationally owned sector investment strategies to support the climate transition.
- Empower academics leading that teaching by funding 20% of their time for research, exchange opportunities, and international collaboration sessions with leading peers.

## Funding Windows

Different forms of incentives will be offered to ensure lasting connections with partner and prestigious universities within the CCG network through our Flatpack Programme.

**MSc Scholarship Window:** This window empowers selected universities to develop sustainable teaching business models that each year produce students with the expertise to shape policy, advocate for national positions and mobilise climate finance. CCG will work with universities to develop a locally tailored MSc curriculum, adapted from the CCG range of energy modelling tools that are aligned with international quality standards. The MSc Scholarship Window will then provide annual grants to a critical mass of students, thereby catalysing the launch of the MSc programme. MSc Scholarship support will be provided for an initial three-year period, covering the first three cohorts of MSc students, potentially renewable for a further three years, but always conditional on the degree programme continuing to meet rigorously

evaluated quality standards. This highly sought-after scholarship will be advertised nationally and bear the name of the leading universities within the CCG partnership.

**Academic Training Window:** To ensure the quality of the MSc programme, it will be important for academics from the partner universities to be thoroughly trained in the delivery of the energy modelling modules by the CCG partnership. This window provides grants that cover the costs for academics from the Global South to attend three-week international joint summer schools, which provide an intensive crash course in how to teach the latest analytics and include coached production of nationally relevant case studies.

**Sabbatical Window:** Eligible academics who have completed Academic Training and are delivering high-quality instruction on the MSc programme are then eligible to apply for grants

to cover the cost of month-long mini sabbaticals at UNESCO's International Centre for Theoretical Physics (or, subject to agreement, another collaborating hub). This opportunity provides academics with the time and space to develop their own research agendas, papers and funding proposals in collaboration with research hubs. The academics will also receive an affiliation with the hubs to which they become connected.

**Research Collaboration Window:** Eligible academics who have completed mini-sabbaticals and produced substantive research outputs become eligible to apply for grants from the

Research Collaboration Window, which will be adjudicated based on the quality of research proposals. These grants cover 20% of academics' time for one year, allowing them to work on relevant research projects relating to the climate transition. Given the low level of academic salaries, it is not typically financially feasible for academics in the Global South to devote any significant time to research. Strengthening the research profile of academic instructors on graduate programmes, improves analytical capacity in-country to inform the development of public policy, and further benefits the students they teach.

## Support the Catalyst Facility

Join us in a transformative journey to revolutionise education and research to support the climate transition Global South. Through our Catalyst Facility we seek visionary philanthropies to invest in a groundbreaking initiative that will nurture a new generation of leaders and drive sustainable development.

With modest investment, you can empower a network of universities to produce a wealth of academic output, resulting in the following tangible outcomes.

- A champion academic institution per country, fostering a research culture of innovation and collaboration.
- Cohorts of highly skilled graduates in each country, equipped to tackle critical challenges.
- A significant flow of peer-reviewed academic papers, contributing to the global body of knowledge.
- A substantial series of policy support

documents, shaping evidence-based decision-making.

Your generous contribution will catalyse a ripple effect of transformation, empowering the Global South to take ownership of its development trajectory. Together, we can:

- Cultivate a coalition of experts with the skills and knowledge to address pressing issues
- Strengthen research capacity and foster a culture of innovation
- Generate policy-relevant insights to inform sustainable development
- Bridge the gap between academia and real-world problem-solving

Your partnership will be instrumental in shaping the future of education and research for the climate transition, paving the way for a more equitable and prosperous global landscape. We look forward to discussing this exciting proposal with you further.

### Contact Us

**Emails:** [P.Allen2@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:P.Allen2@lboro.ac.uk)

**Website:** [www.climatecompatiblegrowth.com](http://www.climatecompatiblegrowth.com)