



UK Science
& Innovation
Network

Latam newsletter



Print

July 2015

SIN Latest Activities

BRAZIL: Kew Gardens hold Digital Amazon Workshop

Royal Botanical Gardens Kew held a “Digital Amazon” Workshop to agree research parameters for the priceless Amazon ethnobotanic collection of British botanist, Richard Spruce, kept at Kew & the British Museum. Six top Brazilian ethnobotanists and six UK experts from Kew and Birbeck College attended the workshop between 13-15 July, financed by BIS’s Global Partnership Fund. Sir Ghilean Prance, World-class taxonomist and botanist specialising in the Amazon provided expert advice alongside renowned explorer, John Hemming, who also delivered a presentation on his new book “Naturalists in Paradise: Wallace, Bates and Spruce in the Amazon” encompassing the journeys of these three 19th Century British explorers. Dr Julia Knights, Director of SIN Brazil delivered a presentation on the Newton Fund. Outputs from the workshop include a digital archive of the British Museum’s Richard Spruce collection announced & presented by Dr Jago Cooper, Curator & Head of the Americas at the British Museum. A report on the group’s agreed research questions, methodology for creating the data sets & timeline for submitting research proposals will soon be submitted by the workshop organisers - Dr William Milken, Research leader for Diversity & Livelihoods at Kew joint with Mark Nesbitt, Head of Kew’s Ethnobotany collection & Dr Luciana Martins, Co-Director for the Centre for Iberian and Latin American Visual Studies of Birbeck, University of London.



BRAZIL: Newton launches digitisation of Kew’s Brazilian plant collection in Rio

A launch of phase II of the “Reflora” project, the digital repatriation of Royal Botanical Garden - Kew’s Brazilian Plant Collection took place at the Rio Botanical Gardens on the 25th June.

Funded by the UK government’s Newton Fund, this second phase of the project aims to digitally repatriate 20,000 species of Brazilian plants from Kew’s herbarium for the Rio Botanical Gardens virtual herbarium. Kew’s unique collection contains plants collected by Charles Darwin. To date 100 new plant species have been discovered and 200 joint research papers with Kew have been published since the Reflora project started in 2008. Reflora is also enabling Brazil to meet its obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity. It also enables improvement in the quality of biodiversity data available to scientists and policy-makers internationally. The launch was organised by SIN-Brazil’s Newton team in conjunction with British Council, Kew, CNPq, & Rio botanical gardens with strong media coverage across Brazil. In Brazil, SIN-Brazil’s Newton Team has strategic oversight of the £27 Million of Newton Fund and works to create strong long-term science & innovation partnerships between the delivery partners of both UK & Brazil. In its first year, SIN Brazil negotiated match funding of a further £27 M from the Brazilian government. In its second year in Brazil, the Newton Fund has already been used to deliver funds to over 1,222 UK and Brazilian grant holders in neglected diseases, climate change and public health.



Links for more information: [here](#) and [here](#)

BRAZIL: UK's Science Museum Group & Rio's Museum of Tomorrow sign partnership

The UK's Science Museum Group and Rio de Janeiro's Museum of Tomorrow have signed a letter of intent to partner in exhibitions and staff exchanges. The partnership was celebrated during the Seminar "Museums and its Audiences" promoted by the British Council's "Transform" Programme, on the 26th of June in Rio. Eric Klug, Acting director of British Council in Brazil & Consul General Jonathan Dunn witnessed the signing. At the event Jean Franczyk, Deputy Director of the UK's Science Museum Group, delivered a dynamic lecture to an audience of around 200 on how the Science Museum Group engage the public in science through inspiring, engaging and memorable learning experiences with their core mission to "help people make sense of science in our lives". Jean also outlined the Science Museum Group's touring contemporary exhibitions such as their "Blueprints" and the large scale exhibitions such as "Collider". After the launch, SIN Brazil accompanied Jean to visit the director of Rio's Museum of Life to explore further collaboration opportunities.

Links for more information: [here](#) and [here](#)



BRAZIL: Innovation is GREAT lecture on Social Ecological Systems

Prof Jon Lovett, Chair in Global Challenges at the School of Geography at the University of Leeds delivered a lecture on social ecological systems in the second of SIN-Brazil's Innovation is GREAT lectures in Brasilia. In his lecture this June, Prof Lovett outlined how increasingly we are looking to ecology to solve global issues rather than superimposing technologies. Mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, bioenergy, water-sensitive design & green bridges were discussed with a lively audience of over 60 professors and students at the University of Brasilia. An outcome is that Prof Lovett aims to return in the autumn to deliver a module of lectures on the topic to students at the University. Prof Jon Lovett is also a visiting professor at the Royal Botanical Gardens Kew.



COLOMBIA & PARAGUAY: Launch of Agri-tech project at the Milan Expo

The FCO's "Increasing Food Security and agricultural competitiveness in Colombia & Paraguay" (IFSec) Prosperity Fund project was launched during Britain Agritech week at the Milan Expo on 10th July. An audience of British and Colombian agricultural companies and organisations attended the launched at the Colombian Pavilion. Wyn Cudlip from the UK's Satellite Applications Catapult delivered a speech on the benefits of using satellite imagery in agriculture. Whilst Pascual Martinez, advisor to ProColombia shared statistics on Colombian Agriculture and the opportunities for foreign companies to do business in Colombia. Andrew Jackson, Head of the FCO's Science, Innovation and Climate Department, Juan Pablo Cavalier, Pavilion Colombian Ambassador and Mrs Gomez de Lievano, Colombian Consul for Milan also attended. The British Embassy in Bogota participated in the Britain Agri-tech week between 6-10 July to promoted a raft of opportunities in agriculture.

[Link for more information](#)



BRAZIL: Innovation is GREAT in Manaus

SIN Brazil's UKTI Innovation Manager, Angelica Garcia, participated in two of Brazil's main startup events to promote the UK's expertise in startups and accelerators. In Manaus, Angelica mentored teams during the Startup Weekend at the Samsung Ocean. This event's goal was to help entrepreneurs internationally to transform ideas into startups. In Sao Jose do Rio Preto Angelica also delivered a lecture to students and the local community at Paulista University about the role of accelerators during the development of a Startup.



MEXICO: British Ambassador to Mexico publishes Article on SIN Activities

Mexico's prestigious paper, Excelsior Global, has published an article on new collaboration opportunities under the Newton Fund and its link to SIN Mexico's science projects written by British Ambassador to Mexico, Duncan Taylor. The article included success stories and impacts from UK Mexico science collaborations.

[Link for the article \(in Spanish\)](#)

MEXICO: Joining Efforts to Engage Researchers Community and Private Sector

CONACYT, INADEM, British Council and Innovate UK shared best practices, knowledge, and research and development procedures at a raft of events coordinated by Mexico's Newton Team in London 8-10 July. An event on the Newton Fund Institutional Links project strengthened bilateral links and identified synergies amongst work groups. Innovate UK and CONACYT also coordinated a meeting between enterprises and research centres of Mexico and UK to encourage their participation in the Mexico-UK Collaborative Industrial R&D Competition.

Funding Opportunities

The UK government's Newton Fund has a new website!

The Newton Fund is a UK government Official Development Assistance (ODA) fund aimed at promoting social and economical development in 15 different host countries through Science and Innovation initiatives. Newton Fund activities need to clearly demonstrate that they are aiming to contribute to a reduction in poverty towards sustainable development (development that is likely to generate lasting benefits for the population of the country to which it is provided) or improve the welfare of the population of Newton Fund countries.

For more info visit our new website at <http://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/>

BRAZIL: Technology Innovation Projects Funding Opportunity

The programme SENAI SESI of Innovation funds technology innovation projects. Enterprises from all sizes can submit their applications for the 40 million reais fund to development new products, processes and services to enhance productivity and competitiveness of Brazilian enterprises. All projects need to be implemented in partnership with the Regional departments of SENAI, or SESI or SENAI/CETIQT. Innovate UK is a partner for this funding opportunity.

Applications can be submitted until the 7th of December [here](#)

BRAZIL: CONFAP and UK Academies Second Round Call: Fellowships; Research Mobility and Young Investigator Awards for UK researches

The National Council of Brazilian State Funding Agencies (CONFAP) invites researchers from UK Universities and Research Institutions to spend between two weeks to four years working in Brazil. The call offers a Fellowships Scheme and a Research Mobility scheme. In addition, the São Paulo State Funding Agency (FAPESP) is offering Young Investigator Awards to start a research career in a university or research institution in the State of São Paulo. These awards offer an opportunity for the UK researcher to develop the strengths and capabilities of their research groups through training, collaboration and reciprocal visits with a partner in some of the best research groups in the Brazil. Application deadline: 23 October.

[Link for more information](#)

MEXICO: Launch of £6 M Collaborative Industrial R&D Programme

A £6m Newton Fund programme on enabling high-impact R&D collaborations to tackle global challenges was launched on 25 June between Mexico and the UK. Innovate UK and CONACYT are the delivery partners. Primarily focused on companies, substantial grants are available ranging from £500 K to £1 Million for the development of new technologies, products, services and solutions to challenges in three key sectors: energy, health and agri-tech. Innovate UK and CONACYT hosted a B2B event in London on 10 July to encourage UK Mexico partnership applications. Deadline: 14 October @ 12.00.

[Link for more information](#)

MEXICO: Newton International Fellowships

The scheme provides the opportunity for the best early stage post-doctoral researchers from all over the world to work at UK research institutions for a period of two years. The scheme covers a broad range of the natural, physical, and social sciences, and the humanities and is jointly run by The British Academy, The Academy of Medical Sciences and the Royal Society. Newton Fellowships last for two years. Funding consists of £24,000/ year for subsistence costs, and up to £8,000/year research expenses, as well as a one-off payment of up to £2,000 for relocation expenses. Deadline for applications: 9 September.

[Link for more information](#)

MEXICO: Newton Mobility Grants

These grants provide support for international researchers based in a country covered by the Newton Fund to establish and develop collaboration with UK researchers around a specific jointly defined research project. These one-year awards are particularly suited to initiate *new* collaborative partnerships, between scholars who have not previously worked together, or new initiatives between scholars who have collaborated in the past. The main purpose of the funding is to cover travel and maintenance costs, although costs related to other eligible activities will be considered. Deadline for applications: 16 September.

[Link for more information](#)

PERU: UK and Peru Researcher Links Programme

Tackling global challenges, such as extreme weather conditions, urbanisation, access to affordable health care, food and energy security and meeting the social and economic needs of a growing population requires an integrated research and innovation approach. This will encompass bringing together communities from different disciplines, sectors and countries in high-quality collaborations. The Researcher Links Programme aims to build UK-Partner country research and innovation collaborations centred on these shared research and innovation challenges which have direct relevance to both countries' economic development, under two different mechanisms:

- Researcher Links Workshops aim to enhance and support international development relevant research, contribute to capacity building of early career researchers, and establish new research links or significantly develop existing links, with the potential for longer term sustainability
- Researcher Links Travel Grants aim to allow early-career researchers make international connections that can improve the quality of their research, visiting an institution in the UK or vice versa, strengthen links for future collaboration, build research capacity in developing economies, and enhance the researcher's career opportunities.
- The Researcher Links Programme in Peru is funded by the FCO through the British Embassy in Lima, and implemented by the British Council. The calls are currently open. For enquiries or more information, please send an email to: UK-ResearcherLinks@britishcouncil.org or britishcouncilperu@britishcouncil.org

Links for more information: [here](#) and [here](#).

Upcoming Events

COLOMBIA: Agriculture and Livestock Event Exposition at Expo Agrofuturo

Innovation, Knowledge and Sustainability are the three topics of the largest Colombian agricultural exhibition in Colombia will take place in Medellin between 19-21 August. Over 17000 attendees specialised in agriculture and livestock will attend. The Expo will feature both academic and commercial sections. The UK's Satellite Applications Catapult and Manchester University will deliver a talk about technology at the event and a delegation of UK companies will have stands.

[Link for more information](#)

MEXICO: Newton Advanced Fellowships

The second round of Newton Advanced Fellowships aims at supporting early to mid-career (up to 15 years post-PhD) researchers from the UK in their career development, covering all fields of the Natural Sciences and Engineering, Medical Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities. The award enables international researchers based in a country covered by the Newton Fund to establish and develop collaborations with the UK with the intention of transferring knowledge and research capabilities. Deadline for applications: 16 September.

Links for more information: [here](#) and [here](#)

MEXICO: Researcher Links Call is now open

This month the call for Researcher Links Workshops has been launched. Financed under the Newton Fund through the British Council and Mexico's CONACyT, the aim is to bring together early-career researchers from the UK and Mexico to make international connections that can improve research quality of their projects. The purpose of this grant is to tackle global challenges such as extreme weather conditions, urbanisation, access to affordable health care, food and energy security and meeting the social and economic needs of a growing population. Deadline for applications: 28 September.

[Link for more information](#)

BRAZIL: "Building Bridges with the Future" in Recife

A "Building Bridges with the Future" conference will take place at Cabo do Santo Agostinho, in Recife between 24-26 August. Organised by the Brazilian National Association for Research and Development of Innovative Enterprises (Anpei), the event will involve workshops on competitiveness, a Ted Talk on the Digital Revolution and Big Data, and trans-nationalisation of Brazilian enterprises.

[Link for more info \(in Portuguese\)](#)

BRAZIL: “Light, Science and Life” Week, Brasilia

“Light, Science and Life” will be the theme of Brazil’s 12th National Science and Technology Week during 19-25 October. The theme is based on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution declaring 2015 the year of ‘light’. The website for more information on the week will be released on the 1st of August. UK universities and science institutions are welcome to apply to participate between 1 Aug -1 Sept. More details to follow in the August edition of our SIN Latam Newsletter.

MEXICO: Bilateral collaboration in agri-tech projects

A British Embassy-Mexico agri-tech event related to the Milan Expo and the “Grown in Britain” campaign will be held in Oaxaca on the 27th of August. Organising co-partner MIT Enterprise Forum Mexico will organise a raft of workshops, conferences and panels related to agricultural technologies to create new & showcase existing collaborations with the UK. Key themes include Sustainability & food security. Targeted at public officials, private sector, academics and researchers, the ‘Magna Carta’ will be used to provide a framework to discuss land rights and engage with the participants.

[Link for more information](#)

UK LATAM Research links

SCIENCE POLITICS

MEXICO: Parliamentary Assessment on Technology, Science and Innovation

On 10 July, the UK’s Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) of UK, the Science and Technology Commission from Mexican Senate and the Science and Technology Consultative Forum (FCCyT) signed in London a Mexico-UK “Letter of Intent” for Parliamentary Assessment on Technology, Science and Innovation. This document was signed at a special ceremony, witnessed by Mexico’s Ambassador to the UK, Gómez-Pickering and British Ambassador to Mexico, Duncan Taylor. Jesús Ramírez, Science and Technology Commission from Mexican Senate, José Franco, FCCyT general coordinator and Chris Tyler, POST Director signed the agreement. The letter aims to create a Consultancy Office that will reproduce the POST UK model in Mexico. POST will share assessments on science and innovation issues to Mexican public officials for the development of public policies on health, biology, environment, innovation and technology for development.

COLOMBIA: Startup Summit, Bogota

The Startup Summit on 17 September is Colombia’s annual meeting point for Colombian investors with entrepreneurs.

For more information contact SIN Colombia at <http://colombia-startup.com/en/next-edition-colombia-startup-2015/>

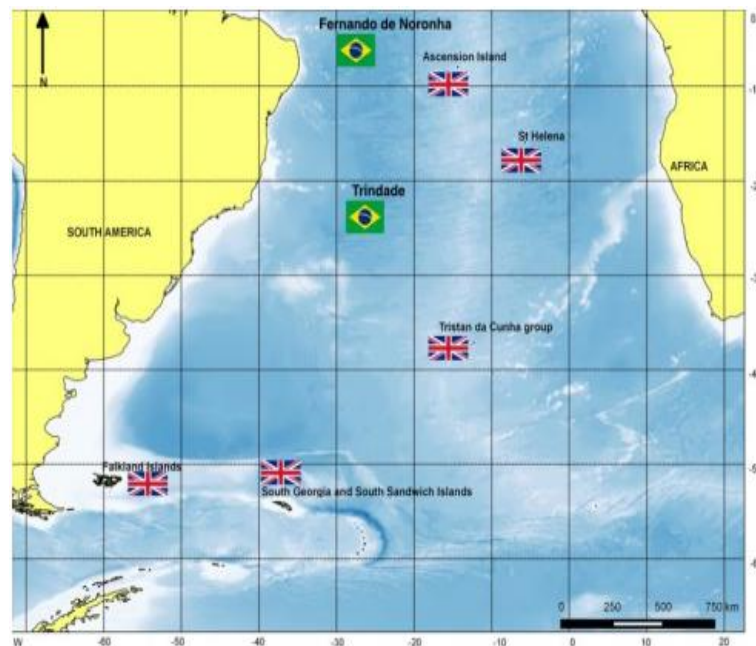


BIOLOGY

BRAZIL: Newton partnership on Evolution Research in South Atlantic Islands

A RCUK FAPERJ Newton funded workshop on “improving the understanding of cryptogamic diversity and the bio-geography of the Southern Atlantic Islands” took place at the Rio Botanical Gardens in May. Scientists from London’s Natural History Museum, the Institute of Research of the Botanic Gardens of São Paulo, the University of Brasilia (UnB), the Institute of Botany of Sao Paulo (IBt), & the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), met for the first time to discuss scientific partnerships of the South Atlantic Islands. Dr Julia Knights, SIN Brazil director also attended and delivered a speech on UK Brazil Science partnership opportunities under the Newton Fund and through FCO Prosperity Funding. Islands are natural laboratories of evolution, and are fundamental to understanding the biographical processes. Scientific research aimed at understanding the bio-geographical relationships between islands, and between the islands and the mainland, need effective cooperation between the countries that administer the islands (mainly Brazil and the UK In the case of the South Atlantic Islands). Long-term partnerships, such as that of Brazil and the UK, on the South Atlantic are becoming increasingly important, since nature can only be understood as a whole, and does not recognise the borders created by man. This project is invaluable in creating such a long-term research partnership. A second meeting is planned for November, in London.

[Link for more information](#)



NEWTON FUND

BRAZIL: British Council successfully runs two Newton Fund Calls and announces preliminary results

The British Council Brazil ranked number one in the number of proposals received under the Newton Programme Researcher Links, which funds bilateral scientific workshops. In total, 42 proposals were received from more than twelve Brazilian states. In turn, the Researcher Connect call already awarded 10 different states and is selecting ten more to receive British Council Courses in researcher development and scientific communications.

UNIVERSITIES

MEXICO: University of Manchester strengthens its presence in Mexico

A series of initiatives driven by the University of Manchester have established fruitful relationships in research and innovation with Mexican institutions across the country. To celebrate this, the University hosted the event 'Tiles of Knowledge' organised by Mexico's National Council of Science and Technology and the Mexican Academy of Sciences during 6-7 July. The event focused on graphene, health, energy, women in science, innovation, entrepreneurship and science communication.

[Link for more information](#)

HEALTH

BRAZIL: Brazilian Project Chosen at Grand Challenges Explorations

The Grand Challenges Explorations is an initiative which aims to stimulate innovative solutions in global health and development. This is the 14th edition, and Dr. Zilma Reis's project from the Federal University of Minas Gerais project was selected. Her project's goal is to create a low-cost portable device that will utilize LED light to measure the thickness of the skin and quarantine concentration in newborns in order to identify their age. According to Dr. Reis, her technique will be more precise than ultrasound.

[Link for more information \(in Portuguese\)](#)

TECHNOLOGY

CHILE: UK Collaboration in tackling illegal fishing in Chile

Building upon the relations cemented by two previous Satellite Applications Catapult projects funded by the Newton Fund in Chile, the Catapult is now developing further collaboration in Chile. A project with the Chilean Maritime Agency (DIRECTEMAR) is currently under way to provide intelligence against illegal, unlicensed and unregistered (IUU) fishing. The objective is to have an MoU signed between the Minister of Foreign Relations, Minister Muñoz, and British Ambassador to Chile, Fiona Clouder. The Satellite Applications Catapult is working to produce a functioning operations room demonstration for the "Our Oceans" Conference in Chile in October to generate interest and exhibit the capabilities. The Catapult will be providing matched funding and is currently seeking a partner department within the Chilean Government. The project aims to advance and prove the understanding and technology for detecting behavioural patterns of fishing vessels involved in IUU. It also aims to develop and deploy a pre-operational demonstrator in Valparaiso, Chile to test and evaluate the new found understanding, and clearly demonstrate how the desired benefits of tracking IUU can be achieved and create the business model for taking the project outputs forward into a fully operational service.

[Print](#)

Newton Advanced Fellowship winners announced

The Academy of Medical Sciences, the British Academy and the Royal Society have announced the successful award holders from the first round of the Newton Advanced Fellowships funded by the UK Academies in each of their partner countries. The scheme provides established international researchers with an opportunity to develop the research strengths and capabilities of their research groups through training, collaboration and reciprocal visits with a partner in the UK.

[Link for more information](#)



MEXICO: Skin regeneration through polymer in third-degree burns

Researchers from the Chemistry faculty at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) have developed a polymer from gallic acid, an organic low cost component, which is normally found in tea leaves, oak bark, apples and blueberries. Dr Miquel Gimeno Seco, leader of the research project, claims that the polymer can help skin regeneration in third degree burns. He claims the antibiotic properties could also have a potential use in the food and drugs industry. Tests are being carried out in collaboration with the National Rehabilitation Centre. Another potential application would be in the electronics field, as this polymer can be used as an organic semiconductor

[Link for more information \(in Spanish\)](#)

For further information please contact the Editor at the UK's Science & Innovation Network (SIN) - Brazil at sin.brazil@fco.gov.uk

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