

# Mão amiga: UK to host 1,000s of Brazilian students



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By Sam Creighton

**Brazil is set to strike up closer links with the UK through student scholarships and research partnerships.**

Last week, the nation hosted a UK delegation led by Nick Clegg, the deputy prime minister, and including David Willetts, the universities and science minister, plus nine UK vice-chancellors.

The talks led to an agreement for UK universities to host thousands of Brazilian scholarship students over the next four years, and may also lead to a research partnership.

A working group will be established, led by the UK Higher Education International Unit, to implement initiatives over the next five years.

Sir Steve Smith, the Universities UK president and a member of the delegation, said that the UK was already performing well in generating research funding from Europe, but needed to tap into nations such as India, China and Brazil that are "strongly investing" in research.

In Brazil, two-thirds of the funds to develop science come from the public purse. In 2010, its Ministry of Science and Technology's budget amounted to about R\$7.6 billion (£3 billion). This included funds for facilities and doctoral training, but excluded state-level finance.

Sir Steve said: "What the UK government has worked out is that for the country to succeed in the long term, we have to have strongly embedded, sustainable links with the other major research economies."

The agreement could result in a UK-Brazil Education Research Initiative, Sir Steve said, mirroring the outcome of talks between the UK and India led by Prime Minister David Cameron last year.

Aloizio Mercadante Oliva, the Brazilian minister of science and technology, met with his counterpart, Mr Willetts, during the talks.

Brazil aims to send 75,000 students to study overseas during the next four years and the UK is set to host about 10,000 of them, Sir Steve said.

However, Brazilian funding will only partly cover the cost of tuition, so private investment is being sought. The Santander Universities network has already pledged support, as has the global energy business BG Group.