



NOTE This is the first phase of our new website – let us know if you have [feedback](#) or would like to [help us test new developments](#).

NERC standard and new investigator grant

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| Opportunity status: | Open |
| Funders: | Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) |
| Funding type: | Grant |
| Publication date: | 20 September 2020 |
| Opening date: | N/A |
| Closing date: | 21 January 2021 16:00 UK time |

Last updated: 21 October 2020

[Start application](#)

This funding opportunity supports researchers to carry out world-class research projects in any area of environmental science within our remit. You must be based at a UK university or other approved research institution.

You can apply for funding of up to £800,000 to cover your research costs such as salaries and other project-related costs. You may be able to apply for more than the £800,000 funding limit (100% full economic cost). We will fund up to 80% of your project's full economic cost.

This funding opportunity has closing dates in January and July each year.

[Open all](#)

Who can apply

You can apply if you are a research group or individual. To be eligible as a principal investigator you must be:

- resident in the UK
- employed by an eligible UK research organisation (higher education institution, research council institute or a recognised independent research organisation)
- employed at lecturer (or equivalent) level or above.

We encourage multidisciplinary research and collaborations with other UK organisations. International and non-academic collaborators can be involved as project partners.

New investigators

If you want to apply as a new investigator, you must meet the same eligibility criteria as a principal investigator but be at the start of your independent scientific career. You must:

- be within five years of first becoming eligible for NERC funding as a principal investigator
- not have received competitive research funding from any source as a principal investigator including post-doctoral research assistant staff support costs.

[Find out more about eligibility in our research grants and fellowships handbook \(PDF, 755KB\).](#)

What we're looking for

As a researcher you can submit a proposal in any area of environmental science that interests you, provided that it is predominantly within our remit:

- archaeology
- atmospheric physics and chemistry
- climate and climate change
- ecology, biodiversity and systematics
- genetics and development
- geosciences
- marine environments
- medical and health interface
- microbial sciences
- omic sciences and technologies
- planetary science
- plant and crop science
- pollution, waste and resources
- terrestrial and freshwater environments
- tools, technology and methods.

We also welcome multidisciplinary proposals that cross into other research council areas.

We're looking for proposals that can support pure, applied, technology-led or policy-driven research but still address – or provide the means to address – clearly-defined scientific questions.

We will usually fund costs at 80% full economic cost, apart from equipment which will be funded at 100%, including:

- directly-incurred costs such as staff payroll, travel and subsistence and consumables
 - equipment
 - directly-allocated costs such as investigators' salaries, estates costs and shared resources
 - indirect costs such as research organisation administration.
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How to apply

You must apply using the [Joint Electronic Submission system \(Je-S\)](#).

We recommend you start your application early. You can save completed details in Je-S at any time and return to continue your application later.

When applying select 'New document' then one of the following options:

- standard grant [date]
- standard grant – new investigator [date]

You can find advice on completing your application in the [Je-S handbook](#).

If you need further help, you can contact the Je-S help desk on 01793 444164 or by email jeshelp@je-s.ukri.org.

Your host organisation will be able to provide advice and guidance on completing your application.

If you are planning to apply for more than the funding limit of £800,000, you must get approval first as your application will be rejected if you have not received permission before you apply.

There are restrictions on how many applications a research organisation can make. This will depend on the organisation's previous standard grants success rate.

- [Read our standard grant demand management measures per research organisation 2019 guide \(PDF, 220KB\)](#)
- [You can find out more about the application process in our research grants and fellowships handbook \(PDF, 755KB\)](#).

Applying for more than £800,000

We will accept applications for more than the normal £800,000 limit in exceptional cases. For example, if you have high facility, fieldwork, equipment or other costs

but your project does not meet our large grant scheme's requirements for scale and complexity of research.

You must contact us before you submit your application to get our permission to submit a standard grant proposal that is higher than the maximum funding limit. This includes costs for:

- the Geophysical Equipment Facility ocean bottom instruments
- Geophysical Equipment Facility seismometers
- Facility for Airborne Atmospheric Measurements / Airborne Research & Survey Facility / British Antarctic Survey twin otter aircraft (the facility will be able to advise on eligible instrument or aircraft costs)
- European Incoherent Scatter Radar facility
- other ship-time or marine facility related costs.

[Find out more in section B of our research grants and fellowships handbook \(PDF 755KB\).](#)

How we will assess your application

We will assess your proposal for its scientific excellence using a peer review process. This consists of two stages:

Expert review

We invite three to four UK and international experts to review your proposal. These may be members of NERC's [Peer Review College](#). You may nominate reviewers and we will invite them to comment on your proposal. You will have the chance to respond to reviewers' comments.

Moderating panel

This will include peer review college members and other experts as required.

We aim to complete the assessment process within six months of receiving your application.

[Find out more about our assessment process.](#)

Contact details

Research grants team: researchgrants@nerc.ukri.org

Additional info

NERC has agreements with other funders such as the National Science Foundation and São Paulo Research Foundation. This can make it easier for UK researchers to collaborate with research partners around the world by removing the risk that a proposed project will receive funding in one country but not in another.

[Find out more about our international funding agreements.](#)

Supporting documents

- [Research grants and fellowships handbook \(PDF, 755KB\)](#)
 - [Approved research council institutes \(PDF, 17KB\)](#)
 - [Approved independent research organisations \(PDF, 26KB\)](#)
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Timeline

21 January 2021

Next closing date

Within six months

Review date

Related content

[Our research areas](#)

[Proposal assessment process](#)