



Natural  
Environment  
Research Council

# NERC RESEARCH GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS HANDBOOK

Edition 2026 – 1.0

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# NERC RESEARCH GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS 2026

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## Foreword

This handbook sets out the regulations governing research grants and fellowships awarded by the Natural Environment Research Council. It sets out the application procedures and eligibility requirements. It also outlines the funding and facilities available to grant-holders, and details the responsibilities of NERC, grant holders and research organisations. It must be read in conjunction with the core [terms and conditions](#) that have been agreed across all research councils.

The handbook focuses on grants and fellowships awarded through NERC Applicant Led and Targeted Funding . NERC Studentships and Training Grants are not covered by this handbook, but are instead governed by the [Terms and Conditions of Research Council Training Grants](#).

The main changes to the regulations will be made in updates of the handbook. However, NERC reserves the right to amend these regulations at any time and without prior notice. The regulations in effect at any time will be those contained in the most recent version of this handbook, available on the NERC website. Applicants must adhere to the requirements and guidance outlined within each funding opportunity.

Changes and points to note (Edition 2026 – 1.0 June 2026).

Update to Project Lead eligibility to reflect the UKRI policy.

ARCHER2 service update.

Additional supporting information added to the sections for Independent Research Fellowships (IRF) and for Associated Studentships.

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## Section A - INTRODUCTION

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### General Principles

1. The NERC research grant and fellowship schemes provide financial support for environmental researchers in UK universities and other approved institutions to conceive and develop their own projects. The scientific research carried out under NERC grants should be ethically sound, innovative and of the highest quality, and must fall within the NERC scientific remit.
2. Each funding opportunity will be advertised on the [funding finder](#) on the UKRI website and applications must be submitted to NERC by 16:00 (4PM) on the published closing date.
3. Grants are awarded on the basis of a proportion of the full economic cost (fEC), calculated in accordance with the TRAC (Transparent Approach to Costing) methodology (Universities and other Higher Education bodies) or by an equivalent methodology by other Research Organisations. The proportion of fEC supported is 80%.
4. Grants awarded by the NERC are made to Research Organisations on the basis of the UKRI [Terms and Conditions for Research Council fEC Grants](#).
5. Grants support eligible researchers, for a specified period to carry out a defined programme of research, or research related activity, including technology development where it has clear application for future research. The team will be involved in the leadership and management of the research project.
6. Grant and fellowship applications are normally assessed through independent scientific expert review. In evaluating applications and selecting the best research, NERC uses the knowledge, advice and expertise of its [Peer Review College](#) or an equivalent panel of experts. There is an expectation that all NERC grant applicants should play their part in NERC peer review activity. There is a shared responsibility for delivering this essential part of the grants process.
7. Grant-holders will be given the freedom to develop the work in their own way, but NERC is obliged to retain adequate control over the use of public funds. Whilst there will be scope for flexibility in planning and executing the research, major changes from the programme originally proposed will need the prior approval of NERC.
8. NERC encourages collaborations between researchers and all applicants should consider the possibility of collaboration with other researchers in the UK and overseas and multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinary team approaches when formulating applications. Part of the assessment of an application will be based on the relationship with similar work being carried out elsewhere, and whether full advantage will be taken of opportunities for consultation and co-operation.

## Section B – TYPES OF AWARD

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9. NERC supports a number of grant and fellowship schemes through its Applicant Led and Targeted Funding. Whilst the exact conditions and closing dates vary, applicants for all the schemes must meet the eligibility criteria set out in each funding opportunity announcement.

### Applicant Led Funding

10. NERC Applicant Led spans the full breadth of sciences and methodologies required to advance our understanding of the Earth system and to reveal people's impact on environmental processes. It is driving policy change and catalysing innovation in the UK and worldwide.
11. NERC Applicant Led funding supports environmental research driven by curiosity and imagination rather than our strategic priorities. We welcome, multi and interdisciplinary research, designed, supported, and delivered in partnership with other research funders and research users. Applicant Led grants can support pure, applied, technology-led or policy-driven research that addresses, or provides the means to address, clearly defined scientific questions. Applications do not need to be hypothesis-driven and may instead focus on an exploratory approach or the development of a new technology.
12. Applicant Led is a key component of delivering the strategy of NERC and is intended to facilitate the identification of the next generation of strategic priorities. By providing early-career researchers with the opportunity to develop their careers, together with its support for cutting-edge areas of science, Applicant Led plays a crucial role in sustaining the UK's position as a world leader in environmental science research.
13. [Applicant Led funding schemes](#) are listed below:
  - Pushing the Frontiers
  - Large Grants
  - Urgency Grants
  - Fellowships

### Pushing the Frontiers

14. The Pushing the Frontiers scheme invests in excellence, challenging researchers to push the boundaries of environmental research. The adventurous and ambitious curiosity-driven, high-risk, high-reward projects lead to scientific discoveries that are likely to change the future landscape of a discipline. Most applications will be expected to be under £950,000.
15. We recognise that a small number of projects have exceptional costs (for example, for use of large research infrastructure facilities) that may require the budget to exceed the maximum grant limit. Applications for more than £950,000 must seek prior approval from NERC first. A case for why the costs are essential for the project and why they exceed

the maximum limit must be submitted by email to [pushingthefrontiers@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:pushingthefrontiers@nerc.ukri.org) before submission. The total cost includes facility costs (where applicable).

16. The following are examples of costs which would be allowed to fall outside the funding limit. It is not an exhaustive list:
  - GEF Ocean Bottom Instrument(s)
  - GEF seismometer(s)
  - BAS Twin Otter aircraft (the facility will be able to advise on eligible instrument or aircraft costs)
  - EISCAT Radar facility
  - BGS Rock Drill (Remote Drill Two/RD2)
  - RV Prince Madog
  - BIFoR FACE facility
  - other NERC ship-time or marine facility related costs

#### Large Grants

17. Large grants support innovative, largescale and complex projects tackling big science questions that cannot be addressed through a Pushing the Frontiers grant and have the potential to produce world-leading research. This funding opportunity is open to research groups and individuals. The research project must address a significant environmental science question that is predominantly within NERC's remit, but applications are welcomed from individuals who can demonstrate a capability to collaborate with experts from other disciplines, perhaps from science areas covered by other research councils, to generate innovative research. NERC encourages multidisciplinary research and collaborations with other UK organisations.
18. Funding of between £1.12 million and £3.45 million is available for projects lasting up to five years. The total cost includes any Associated Studentships and facility costs (for example, ship time). Applications with a more modest budget are also encouraged.

#### Urgency Grants

19. Exceptionally, an application for a research grant may be submitted at any time for rapid consideration under the Urgency procedure. This is permitted only in cases where the application has been prompted by an unexpected and transient scientific opportunity created by the occurrence of sporadic natural events such as earthquakes, droughts, floods or ephemeral events in ecosystems
20. The maximum funding that may be sought for an Urgency application is £100,000 and includes any facilities costs. The maximum duration of an Urgency grant is 12 months. Urgency grants are expected to focus on urgent data collection and essential initial analysis only. A clear strategy for taking the research forward once the urgent phase is completed is required. Subsequent additional funding may be sought by applying for

another Grant in the normal way.

21. Items of equipment costing more than £25,000 may not be requested via the Urgency grant scheme. No studentships are awarded under this scheme.

#### Independent Research Fellowships (IRF)

22. The aim of the NERC Independent Research Fellowship (IRF) scheme is to enable outstanding researchers to devote their time to research and to produce work of international importance with the expectation that they develop into science leaders. The IRF scheme supports applications from theoretical and observational researchers.
23. NERC IRFs are early career fellowships and provide support for five years, giving successful fellows time to develop their research, start to build a research group and become internationally recognised. Up to two years can be spent at a collaborative institution in the UK or overseas. NERC IRFs can dedicate six hours a week to other activities apart from research. These activities should be in line with their IRF research or development/career goals.
24. There are no funding limits for IRF applications, but the fellowship applicant must be the only named researcher on the application and no equipment (costing more than £25,000 including VAT) can be requested.
25. NERC IRFs must be at least 50% within NERCs remit.
26. NERC welcomes applications from candidates who wish to work on a part-time/flexible basis in order to combine caring responsibilities with a career. A part-time fellow may not hold another part-time position in conjunction with the fellowship.

#### Targeted Funding

27. NERC's Targeted Funding supports research into environmental areas of major economic and societal importance and aims to address key science challenges and priorities for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Further information can be found at [Targeted Funding](#). Targeted Funding may also award Research or Knowledge Exchange Fellowships.
28. The specific funding opportunity will give details of the funding available, closing dates and contact details for further information. The appropriate NERC Programme Manager will be able to provide advice on the specific terms and conditions that apply to that funding opportunity.

#### Funding Across Research Councils

29. Applicant led applications, under the Pushing the Frontiers, Large Grant and Independent Research Fellowship schemes, that extend beyond the remit of NERC may be assessed under the [Cross Council Remit Agreement \(CCRA\)](#).

#### Funding for International Collaborations

30. NERC is working internationally with other funding organisations to help support excellent

research collaborations. Information is available on the [UKRI website](#) and [Funding finder](#). Agreements are now in place with the [US's National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#), [FAPESP \(Brazil\)](#) and [Fonds National de la Recherche \(FNR\)](#) in Luxembourg. The UKRI website includes the guidance for applicants and will be updated as new agreements are set up. The very first stage for the NERC-NSF Lead Agency process is for the project lead to contact the proposed lead funding agency to confirm which will lead. This step is important as it affects the later process that applicants need to follow, which includes a preliminary/outline application or letter of intent stage before any full application can be submitted to NERC or NSF.

31. Where an "international co-applicant" agreement is in place, NERC will fund specified direct costs for the international collaborators and team. NERC has an agreement to fund collaborations involving [IIASA](#) NERC will accept applications where there is a project co-lead International from Norway. NERC will pay 100% of the eligible direct costs only (not Estates and Indirect costs) and the maximum requested can be 30% of the total cost of any application for all eligible international costs (not per collaborator or country/scheme). All funding will be provided to a UK grant holding organisation. Unless specified in the funding opportunity, all other international collaborators are required to be project partners and fund their own involvement (minor incidental expenses can still be requested).

## Section C - ELIGIBILITY

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### UKRI Funding Service Roles and Responsibilities

32. A summary of the [roles and responsibilities](#) used in the UKRI Funding Service can be found on the [UKRI website](#). Individuals' eligibility for a specific funding opportunity can be found within the 'who can apply' section of the funding opportunity's guidance. The project lead eligibility criteria can be found in each specific funding opportunity, within the 'who can apply' section of the opportunity's guidance. Potential applicants should contact NERC ([researchgrants@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:researchgrants@nerc.ukri.org)) in advance of the submission deadline if they have any doubts concerning their eligibility to apply for a research grant from NERC. Note, it is incumbent upon individuals to check their own eligibility prior to submission of any application to NERC.
33. Project leads and project co-leads whose time is not fully funded on other Research Council grants, but who are not paid a salary by the Research Organisation (for example, Emeritus or honorary staff) should show their hours attributed to the project, but with zero salary cost request. Estates and Indirect costs can be requested. If a project lead or project co-lead is retired, the expectation is that their involvement in the project would be covered by a contract with the Research Organisation. The cost of their time attributed to the project is thus likely to be a Directly Incurred cost.
34. NERC will not accept applications from a project lead and project co-leads who are sanctioned for not completing NERC's required output and performance measures on previous grants.

### Fellowships

35. The fellowship applicant is the project lead. No project co-leads are allowed.
36. NERC Fellowships are open to applicants of any nationality, even those currently based at non-UK research organisations, although all Fellowship applications must be submitted through and held at an eligible UK Research Organisation. Successful applicants from the Non-European Economic Area who require a visa to work in the UK will be eligible to be considered under the [Tier 1 \(Exceptional Talent\) visa route](#). Visa costs may be included as Directly Incurred within the fellowship application. The eligibility criteria will be detailed within the funding opportunity in the UKRI website [funding finder](#).
37. Applicants for NERC Independent Research Fellowships must expect to submit their PhD thesis before the fellowship interview would take place and, if successful, would not be able to take up the fellowship until the intent to award the PhD has been confirmed by the awarding university.
38. In addition to Independent Research Fellowships, NERC supports a small number of fellowships through research programmes with the intention of supporting individuals and their research within strategically valuable areas. Details concerning eligibility criteria and the requirements of these fellowships will be included within the funding opportunity information.

39. Applicants may only have one fellowship application under consideration by UKRI (which encompasses all fellowship schemes led by any of the Research Councils and/or Innovate UK). Applicants cannot therefore submit applications to both a NERC fellowship competition and any concurrent UKRI fellowship competition.

#### Project Partners

40. On research grant applications the project lead may also name formal project partners, who will not receive funding directly from the award, but will have an integral role in the proposed research. This may include direct (cash) or indirect (in-kind) contributions such as expertise, staff time or use of facilities. Project partners may be in industry, academia, third sector or government organisations in the UK or overseas, including partners based in the EU. Minor Directly Incurred costs may be requested to facilitate collaboration. There is no limit to the number of project partners. project partners must be separate Research Organisations to those submitting the application.
41. Project partners should ensure the availability of the necessary facilities and infrastructure and it is the responsibility of named project partners to read and comply with the [terms and conditions](#) relating to UKRI funding.

#### Eligible Research Organisations

42. NERC research and fellowship grants for all schemes may be held at approved UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Research Council Institutes (RCIs), Independent Research Organisations (IROs), Public Sector Research Establishments (PSREs) and Catapults. Full details of [approved organisations](#) can be found on the UKRI website. These organisations are eligible for grant funding from all Research Councils.
43. IIASA eligibility applies to NERC funded opportunities announced, in line with the new funding for UK Membership of IIASA. Individual Funding Opportunities will name IIASA as an eligible project co-lead (international). IIASA will not be eligible for funding through some opportunities from UKRI funds. An IIASA project co-lead (international) may not take over from the UK project lead. All IIASA funding will go via the UK Research Organisation and is restricted as detailed in Section E and on the [UKRI website](#).

## Section D – GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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44. NERC Grants are awarded to Research Organisations on the basis of the [Terms and Conditions of Research Council fEC Grants](#). Information is included in this section where it is not covered in the Terms and Conditions or the [associated guidance](#).

### Permission for Research, the Use of Animals, Research Ethics and the Utilisation of Genetic Resources in NERC-funded Research

45. Any application requesting Antarctic Logistic Support by the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and which involves experimentation on live animals will be subject to scrutiny by an Animal Welfare & Ethical Review Body convened by BAS and including external representation (by a veterinary surgeon and by a Home Office advisor). The purpose of this Body is to ensure that procedures which would be regulated by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 if conducted in the UK, meet the requirements of this legislation even though UK law is not applicable in Antarctica or South Georgia, where BAS operates. It is BAS policy to involve the Animal Welfare & Ethical Review Body to ensure that experiments performed in the Antarctic or at South Georgia meet the same Home Office requirements as if the procedures were to be conducted in the UK.

### Starting Procedures

46. Regarding RGC 5 of the [UKRI Grant Terms and Conditions](#), exceptionally, the start date may be delayed by more than six months (for example due to sea-time scheduling issues or in the case of Antarctic fieldwork). Permission must be sought from NERC in advance by submitting a completed request for a delay to the starting date, via the Funding Service, to the UKRI Grants Team. This should detail the reasons for, and duration of, the required extension.

### Extensions

47. It is not NERC policy to financially supplement an existing research grant or fellowship. An application for a funded extension to an existing or previous research grant must therefore be submitted as a new application and must demonstrate that the request is for funding a direct development of, but not a supplement to, the earlier work. Applications for extensions will be considered in competition with other applications for funding and should be, in themselves, discrete projects.

### Money Follows Researcher / Transferring Grants in Europe

48. Transfer of funds into other European countries is permitted under the [Money Follows Researcher scheme](#) and allows researchers to take the remainder of their research grant to European countries where the Research Funding Organisation (RFOs) has signed up to the scheme. Full details of the scheme are on the UKRI website.

### Data Availability

49. NERC expects all applicants to have thoroughly considered how they will access any

datasets that they expect to use or access for the duration of the application, in particular, the use of non-UK and non-open access datasets. Applicants are required to provide a list of all datasets required for the application. Applicants should consider and note the risks of not being able to access such data sets, including providing evidence of alternative datasets (and their access policy; evidence of access agreements).

50. Applicants working with overseas partners are encouraged to review their partner country's data access, field site access and transportation of physical samples policies before agreeing working partnerships and submitting joint applications. Applicants must ensure that data produced by the proposed research activities will be released to the UK PI, including full rights to bring any data back into the UK for its storage as part of the grant terms and conditions and in line with [NERC data policy](#).
51. NERC believes that datasets collected as a result of projects are an important resource that must be adequately managed. Project leads should therefore make sure that a NERC Environmental Data Centre is aware of any significant datasets to be compiled as a result of their projects, so that the long-term future of these data can be planned. Information regarding an outline Data Management Plan (ODMP) is required for all applications submitted to NERC. The ODMP will identify data sets likely to be made available to NERC Data Centres for archiving and reuse at the end of the grant. The ODMP, Vision and Approach information from successful applications will be made available to the [NERC Environmental Data Centres](#) and where appropriate, used by them to draft, in collaboration with the project lead, a full Data Management Plan (DMP). This full DMP should be mutually agreed between the Data Centre and the project lead within three to six months of the start date of the grant. At the end of an award holders are required to offer the appropriate Data Centre a copy of any dataset generated, so that the data can be made available for other researchers to use.
52. NERC reserves the right to access all unpublished papers, records, data or collections resulting from the work carried out under a grant, some of which may be required to be deposited with NERC. Similarly, NERC reserves the right to use information on the outcome of awards to report on achievements for example, in annual reports. NERC may, at any time, require detailed information on the results of work funded through grants for use in scientific or financial audits.
53. [NERC Environmental Data Centres](#) will give advice on issues relating to charging, licensing and exploitation of datasets. NERC policy in this area is described in more detail in the [NERC Data Policy](#) and the accompanying [Guidance Notes](#). Advice is also available from [NERC's data management coordinator](#). NERC funded grants that include third party data are advised to document the metadata with the appropriate NERC Environmental Data Centre. Similarly, social science data that is collected as part of a NERC grant should be submitted to the [UK Data Archive](#) and the metadata stored with the appropriate NERC Environmental Data Centre.

#### Associated Studentships

54. Associated Studentships can be requested on large grant applications. Funds for part of or all of a student's PhD work cannot be requested on applications to other applicant led opportunities or Fellowship opportunities. The individual funding opportunity for Targeted funding will give details of whether Associated Studentships can be requested. All Associated Studentships must also meet the relevant [assessment criteria](#). Additional

information is available at: [Large Grant associated studentships](#), [Research Grant Associated Studentships](#).

55. Additional costs should be requested on the research grant application for items such as fieldwork expenses, conferences and consumables. These should be requested as a Directly Incurred cost and will be paid at 80% FEC. No further funding is available for Associated Studentships beyond that requested on the grant.
56. Studentships will include sufficient funds to meet the UKRI minimum stipend and fee levels. Awards will be supplemented with London allowance where eligible. The latest rates for the minimum stipend and university fees can be found on the UKRI website: [Support for UKRI-funded students](#) to calculate the total cost for both the stipend and tuition fees the first-year rate will be multiplied by the duration of the studentship. Indexation for future years will be added in line with award practice by NERC.
57. For research grant applications requesting Associated Studentships, the period of the studentship must fall within the start and end date of the grant, whilst funding from the grant is being used. If there is a delay to the student starting, then a no-cost extension to the research grant should be requested.
58. In line with other NERC studentships, Associated Studentships can be funded for between 3.5 and 4 years. In situations where the initial Associated Student has terminated and a replacement student is found; the research grant can be used to fund the replacement student initially then the remaining funding could be found from a NERC Training Grant.
59. The student has to meet the eligibility requirements as set out in the [Terms and Conditions of UKRI Training Grants and associated guidance](#). Studentships should be recruited in line with the UKRI good practice principles in recruitment and training at a doctoral level.
60. Associated Studentships must comply with the regulations governing other NERC research studentships outlined within the [Terms and Conditions of UKRI Training Grants and associated guidance](#). The Research Organisation must make the same level of provision for training and supervision that would be expected for any NERC -studentship on a training grant, including the [statement of expectations for doctoral training](#). Studentships based at Independent Research Organisations, Research Institutes, Public Sector Research Establishments and Catapult Centres must be associated with a university as the degree-awarding body. An Associated Studentship may be held as a CASE award, if appropriate.
61. Co-funded Associated Studentships are encouraged on some Research Programme opportunities. The co-funding can be through industrial partners or other appropriate funders (not UKRI training grants and applicants must include details of these arrangements in the application).
62. Associated Studentships must comply with the regulations governing other NERC research studentships, including those covering institutional and student eligibility. The Research Organisation must make the same level of provision for training and supervision that would be expected for any other NERC research student; this is

particularly important if there is an Associated Student working in the Antarctic. Studentships based at Independent Research Organisations, Research Institutes, Public Sector Research Establishments and Catapult Centres must be associated with a university as the degree-awarding body. An Associated Studentship may be held as a CASE award, if appropriate.

63. Where there are funds for an Associated Studentship on the grant, and the original student terminates their studentship within the first year, a replacement student can be funded through the grant. No additional funding will be provided. Any shortfall should be found from other departmental funds (including NERC Training Grants,) or by virement of Directly Incurred funds from the research grant. If the student terminates more than one year into the studentship and/or there would be less than two years remaining on the grant by the time the replacement student started, the excess funds can either be vired into Directly Incurred costs and used to fund some technician or researcher staff effort or used to part-fund a replacement studentship, where other funding, such as that from a Training Grant, can be used to support the studentship once the research grant is finished.

## Section E – FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

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64. All grants are awarded subject to the [UKRI Terms and Conditions](#). Additional conditions may be included in grant agreements where required.

### Funding of Fellows and Fellowships

65. Research Council Fellows (or others wholly funded by a sponsor external to the Research Organisation) cannot request their salary on a research grant on which they are a project lead/co-lead, during the period of their fellowship award. If the fellowship was awarded under fEC terms and conditions, Fellows cannot claim Estates or Indirect costs on the research grant during the period of their fellowship award.
66. NERC Fellowship applications cannot request individual items of equipment costing over £25,000. This £25,000 funding limit cannot be used to part-fund equipment costing more than £25,000. Only the project lead (fellow) can be listed in the core team on fellowship applications. Costs can be included to support pool staff time as either DA Other or DI-staff. Visiting researchers, research assistants or Associated Studentships cannot also be requested on Fellowship applications. Any of these DI-staff posts are to be for pool staff only and cannot be used for named researchers or support staff.

### Funding for Eligible Project Co-Lead (International)

67. The following rules apply to IIASA and Norwegian project co-lead (international) funding:
- IIASA/Norwegian project co-lead (international) can request a maximum of 30% of the full economic cost (FEC) of the grant application (NB not 30% of the maximum grant size by scheme and not 30% each)
  - IIASA/Norwegian organisations will be paid at 100% of the justified direct costs, through a UK grant
  - eligible costs are as follows;
    - IIASA/Norwegian project co-lead (international) provided that it is demonstrated that the funding of their salaries within research grants is the standard practice of the Norway project co-lead's employing organisation
    - directly incurred (DI) costs (for example, Travel & Subsistence, consumables)
    - IIASA/Norwegian Research Assistants
  - ineligible costs are;
    - estates and other indirect costs
    - capital costs
    - equipment over £25k (anything under £25k can be requested under DI costs)

## Details on Directly Incurred Costs

### Requesting International costs

68. All costs to be incurred by the international project co-lead (s), whether salary, fieldwork or travel and subsistence, must be entered under the 'Exceptions' heading and a breakdown of these costs outlined within the resources and cost justification section of the application.

### Visiting Researchers

69. Distinguished researchers from the UK or overseas may be funded to visit the Investigator's institution in order to give full time advice and assistance on research in a particular field for up to 12 months during the project. Visiting researchers will normally receive the same salary and conditions as other staff of an equivalent status within the Research Organisation. NERC will only pay their salary for the time that they will be directly working on the proposed project. Estates and Indirect costs will be paid where a visit exceeds 6 months. NERC will not fund a visiting researcher on a fellowship. Reasonable expenses will be paid for travel to and from the UK by visiting researchers, but not their families. The amount requested for the visit should be reduced if a contribution has been received from other sources or if the visit will be partly funded by the visiting researcher's own institution.

### Equipment

70. The threshold for individual items to be classed as equipment is £25,000 (inclusive of VAT). Application requirements will be detailed in the funding opportunity on the funding finder. For large capital opportunities, more information will be required at application stage, whereas for applicant led or targeted funding opportunities, where the assessment focus is on the research excellence, information may be requested for those applications in the funding frame only. Where required, for items of equipment costing between £25,000 and the UKRI Equipment Threshold of £138k (£115k ex VAT), additional information is required in the resources and cost section, including evidence of an evaluation of the use of existing relevant capital assets.
71. The thresholds apply to each individual capitalised asset. Where multiple components are needed to meet the needs of management, multiple components are capitalizable as a single asset. These thresholds apply during the application process as the trigger to determine which application process needs to be followed. They do not impact the procurement process when organisations will need to conform to the OJEU tendering limits that apply to their organisation.
72. Quotes or business cases for equipment should not be attached to an application submitted to UKRI funding opportunities.
73. NERC will pay 80% of the cost of equipment on successful awards for funding opportunities published after 1 April 2025.
74. Equipment purchased from grant funds is primarily for use on the research project for which the research grant was awarded and belongs to the Research Organisation. In certain circumstances NERC may wish to retain ownership throughout the period of the

grant and possibly beyond. In such cases, the grant will be subject to an additional condition.

75. Equipment requested in a research grant application may be available from one of the NERC equipment pools and could be loaned to the Research Organisation for the duration of the award. If this is the case it will be made clear in the award agreement. Pool equipment will be supplied fully serviced and, in a condition, safe to use; advice will be given on any maintenance required.
76. All new equipment purchased over £138,000 (£115,000 excluding VAT) must be registered on the Equipment data national database

### Sub-contracting

77. NERC considers eligible institutions to be best placed to determine how their work is undertaken. If this involves sub-contracting aspects of the work to other organisations due to, for example, the lack of appropriate expertise or facilities in the collaborating organisations, this is acceptable. In such circumstances, NERC would pay the awarded eligible institution which in turn would sub-contract to the service provider as appropriate. Funds requested for sub-contracting should be included in 'Directly Incurred- Other costs' section and NERC will provide 80% of any eligible sub-contract costs. Organisations undertaking sub-contracting should refer to the [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) for information on the training and development opportunities that should be made available to researchers by employers.
78. An organisation will generally not be listed as a project partner and a sub-contractor. An organisation or individual can act as both a Project Partner and Subcontractor, however this must be fully justified as to why this option has been chosen over claiming the costs within the relevant partner organisation's and will be subject to peer review. This enables the organisation/individual to receive recognition as a Project Partner for the elements of their contribution to the project that is in an integral or meaningful capacity, which they wouldn't get if they were needing to be included only as a subcontractor.
79. As a rule, NERC would expect project partner related costs to be minor, where the project needs work to be undertaken that is more significant and includes costs other than travel and subsistence, then the organisation/individual to be contracted may need to be included as both a Project Partner and a Subcontractor. Subcontract services supplied by partner companies should exclude any profit element and be charged at cost. Where a partner is also a subcontractor within a project, it is important that a company in receipt of the project funding stays within subsidy control limits. An example of where dual roles might be required is when an organisation or individual is giving to the project in kind but are also selected to deliver other work to the project involving non-minor costs to be covered via a subcontract.
80. Except in instances where the service provider is from the public sector, the conferring of any IP, author or other rights to it by the contractor in relation to the research grant application for which it was contracted to provide a service, is not permissible. The inclusion of an acknowledgement in any resulting material of the sub-contracted organisation's contribution to the research is however acceptable. Should there be an intimation or desire on the part of the contractor and/or subcontractor not within the public sector, for other than such an acknowledgement for example, co-author status on

resulting publications, then the interaction between the parties concerned would be deemed to equate to a collaboration, in which case any costs incurred (either direct or indirect) cannot be met by NERC.

#### Use of NERC Facilities and Resources

81. Applicants for NERC grants and fellowships may also apply to NERC for access to any of the NERC-supported scientific services and Facilities and Resources. Further information is on the UKRI website under [Facilities and Resources](#), the individual funding opportunities and in Section F of this handbook.

#### Contaminated Land: Applications in Real Environments

82. Costs associated with the Contaminated Land: Applications in Real Environments (CL:AIRE) scheme should be listed as a Directly Incurred cost. Investigators must receive formal written approval from CL:AIRE before any Application can be made to NERC, and copies of this approval must be included with the application. Further details can be found on the [CL:AIRE](#) website.

#### Access to NERC Data

83. NERC has extensive holdings of environmental data. NERC has a well-established [data policy](#) setting the ground rules for managing data that applies to all those funded by NERC. It is the policy of NERC to make its data available to anyone, either free of charge, or at rates intended to recoup only the costs of servicing the request. If applications are to involve access to data held by NERC, Investigators should discuss their requirements in advanced with the appropriate [Environmental Data Centre](#) and identify any costs on the application under the Directly Incurred cost heading. The data centres can also facilitate access to data held outside of NERC. Contact the relevant data centre for more information.

#### Grant Payment Details

84. Payments will normally be made on the 15th day of the final month of the quarter, plus or minus 30 days. NERC reserves the right to amend the payment profile at its discretion. Research Organisations will be advised, in advance, of any such change. Changes to payment profiles may affect the overall value of the award.
85. A single payment will be made to the Research Organisation for all grants held. Details of the payment will be made available.
86. Payment for the purchase of equipment will normally be made in the initial year of the research grant. No allowances will be made for future inflation.

## Section F – APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

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### Application Procedures

87. Any applicant must adhere to the requirements and guidance outlined to each funding opportunity. Any application that does not comply to the funding opportunity requirements or does not meet the eligibility criteria of NERC, will be rejected and will not be considered. NERC must be notified of any change in the named project lead co-lead in an application submitted to NERC still undergoing expert review.
88. Applications for the same research project cannot be submitted to more than one Research Council. Applications submitted to the same NERC funding opportunity should be distinct in content and must not duplicate work outlined in one or more other applications for example, work packages cannot be identical in any two applications. An application may not be submitted for a project for which a grant or fellowship has already been awarded. The same research project may not be submitted to concurrent NERC research grant rounds (applicant led or targeted funding).
89. The Research Councils aim to ensure that there are no gaps between the Councils' subject domains and that there is equality of opportunity for applications at the interface between traditional disciplines. The Research Councils have substantially revised their [protocol for assessing and funding applications that straddle their](#) remit and this protocol can be found on the UKRI website. If applicants are uncertain about which Research Council they should apply to, contact: [nercremit@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:nercremit@nerc.ukri.org).
90. On submitting the application to NERC, each project lead, project co-lead, and project partner is confirming their consent of the use of data by NERC. As part of its normal business as a publicly funded award-giving body and in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act 2018, NERC will use personal data provided on the grant application and acquired subsequently in connection with an application and any resulting grant.
91. The Resources and Cost should include justification for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, use of pool staff resources and any access to shared facilities and equipment being sought. No justification for Directly Allocated Estates and Indirect Costs is required. If resources are not fully justified, they will be subject to reduction. Full justification of all sea-time and facility costs requested on applications is also required.
92. Research and innovation associates whether named or unnamed, should be requested at a salary level commensurate with the skills, responsibilities, expertise and experience necessary to carry out the proposed research activity and should be fully justified in the application. They must be employed and working at the same Research Organisation as at least one of the project lead or project co-leads on the grant.
93. Funds for technicians and other support staff who will be dedicated to the research project, or who will undertake work directly related to the proposed project and whose time can be fully supported by an auditable record (for example, timesheets) during the life of the project, may be sought as directly incurred costs. Funds for technicians and other support staff who will undertake work directly related to the proposed project, but whose time will be shared with other projects or activities and will not be supported by an auditable record, should be claimed as Other Directly Allocated Costs. The need for all

the above-mentioned roles be fully justified in the application. Infrastructure Technicians should be identified separately from Estates costs. As this category of technician represents another overhead which was previously a component of the Estates costs, it does not need to be justified in the application.

94. Successful grants will include funding for the basic salary, National Insurance and superannuation costs for staff to be supported by the grant. An element for future pay awards will be added to grants by NERC. This will be based on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflators issued by the Treasury. Where individuals opt for a personal pension plan (in place of their employer's scheme), NERC will normally meet the cost of this, provided the cost does not exceed the USS/JSS contribution. There is no barrier to the recruitment of scientific staff from overseas, provided they have permission to work in the United Kingdom. The Research Organisation is solely responsible for the procurement of work permits.
95. Where support is requested for an Associated Studentship the studentship must be justified fully in the application. All costs for the student's travel and subsistence, consumables etc. are costed within the Directly Incurred heading on the application.
96. Applicants must consider how they will or might achieve impact throughout their projects and include this as part of their application. Activities to realise impact do not have to be cost-incurring, but relevant costs can be included and must be fully justified within the application.

#### Targeted Funding and Other Schemes

97. Details of the application procedures for Targeted Funding and other schemes can be found in the relevant funding opportunity which will be published on the [UKRI website](#).

#### Resubmission of Applications for Research Grants

98. The [resubmission](#) of an unsuccessful application to NERC through any kind of funding opportunity is not allowed unless an applicant has been explicitly invited to do so by NERC. This includes unsuccessful applications previously submitted to another research council.
99. If applicants are in doubt as to whether an application falls within the remit of NERC, contact they should contact the remit team by emailing [nercremit@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:nercremit@nerc.ukri.org).

#### Invited Resubmissions for Research Grants

100. NERC [invitation-only policy](#) allows further development and improvement of applications that have the potential to be highly competitive, and which have a genuine prospect of being funded. There is no guarantee that a resubmitted application will be successful, as it will be in competition with a new set of applications. NERC will, however, look to invite some assessors who commented on the previously submitted application.

#### What constitutes a new application?

101. A new application should represent a substantially different package of work with a significant change of focus from any previous application submitted to NERC and will

likely be accompanied by a different set of costings and resources to deliver the project. Applications which demonstrate minor amendments from previous submissions will be counted as a resubmission and will be rejected by NERC.

#### Applications Requiring Use of NERC Facilities and Resources

102. NERC provides a wide range of [Facilities and Resources](#) for the environmental sciences research community. Any individual or group of researchers eligible for a NERC training award or research grant may apply for access to any of the Facilities and Resources listed. For some of these, access is provided after the costs have been notionally awarded to the grant holder, subject to peer-review and prioritisation of applications by the relevant facility steering committee to ensure that the highest quality science is supported. In a small number of cases, facilities are funded on a pay-as-you-go (PAYG) basis. Researchers can only apply to PAYG facilities once they have secured funds to cover the full costs from one or other of the NERC funding modes or other sources (although limited support may be available for students and small proof-of-concept studies depending on the facility). Spare capacity in any of the facilities may be made available to non-NERC researchers or commercially.
103. [Application procedures](#) are outlined on the funding opportunity. Prospective applicants must first seek the advice of the appropriate NERC or facility contact before a formal application is submitted. Applicants should contact the relevant facility in good time (generally at least two months) prior to the grant or fellowship application closing date to ensure that the facility can provide the quote in time to be submitted as part of the grant application, and applicants should follow the relevant facility's process. It is incumbent upon the project lead to ensure the logistics of the proposed project. NERC does not consider itself to be responsible for any element of the logistics that are not included within the application. Applications for the use of facilities to support student training should be made by the student's supervisor.
104. It is important to state on the fellowship or grant application what scientific support and facilities are required, with whom contact has been made to discuss the work, and whether a separate application has been made to the relevant facility. Most facilities also require the attachment of a technical assessment/quote or a facility form. Costs from the quotes received by the facility should be included in the cost section of the application under Direct Incurred Other costs. Applications for the use of facilities to support student training should be made by the student's supervisor.
105. A full listing of individual [Facilities and Resources contacts](#) can be found on the NERC website.

#### Applications Requesting Ship Time and/or Marine Equipment

106. Project leads bidding for ship time or marine equipment are required to speak to Marine Planning to discuss their requirements before submission of their online Ship-time and Marine Equipment or Autonomous Deployment (SME/ADF) application form. Failure to do so may result in their request not being included in the NERC Marine Facilities Programme. This requirement is to ensure that a realistic start date and relevant costs are included in the grant application, and to confirm that NERC can supply the required capability. For further information on using NERC Marine Facilities, please refer to the [marine facilities](#) webpage or email [marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org).

107. Applicants wishing to utilise NERC's marine facilities must complete an online Ship-time and Marine Equipment (SME/ADF) application form through the Marine Facilities Planning webpage. SME/ADF forms need to be submitted and then assessed and approved by Marine Planning well in advance of the grant application deadline and to the following timescales. NERC Marine Planning should also be informed of your application by emailing [marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org). Note, timescales should be worked back from any deadlines imposed by a project lead's institution which may be in advance of a funding opportunity deadline. A pdf of the approved SME will then need to be attached to the submission.
- applicants wishing to utilise NERC's marine facilities must complete an online Ship-time and Marine Equipment (SME/ADF) application form through the [Marine Facilities Planning](#) webpage. SME/ADF forms need to be submitted and then assessed and approved by Marine Planning well in advance of the grant application deadline and to the following timescales. NERC Marine Planning should also be informed of your application by emailing [marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org). Note, timescales should be worked back from any deadlines imposed by a project lead's institution which may be in advance of a funding opportunity deadline. A pdf of the approved SME will then need to be attached to the submission.
  - applicant led Pushing the Frontiers/Independent Research Fellowships – SMEs/ADFs must be submitted for approval by Marine Planning by the time your application is submitted. Costs are not required for these applications
  - applicant led large grants – SMEs/ADFs should be submitted at least two months before the funding opportunity deadline to allow time for assessment and approval by Marine Planning and the production of costs to include in the application. SMEs are required at both the outline and the full application stage as costs are required for both stages of the submission process
  - NERC Targeted funding opportunities – the deadline for SMEs/ADFs may vary depending on the particular opportunity and will be detailed in the funding opportunity. PIs are encouraged to submit their SME/ADF and start discussions with Marine Planning as soon as possible. If costing is required, the two-month deadline will apply, unless agreed and advised otherwise with the relevant NERC Programme Manager(s)
  - non-NERC funding streams – SMEs/ADFs should follow the guidelines for large grants, with SMEs submitted at least two months before the funding opportunity deadline. This includes the equivalent of both outline and full stage applications
108. For applications which include a request for Mooring Equipment from the National Marine Equipment Pool (NMEP), then the [NERC Moorings Policy](#) will apply. The Principal Scientist is required to submit a Risk Management form two months prior to the relevant closing date or deadline. Advice can be gained from NERC Marine Planning at any time ([marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org)).
109. For applications which include Seismic/Geophysics Operations, it is the responsibility of the Principal Scientist for the cruise to conduct an environmental impact assessment and/or ascertain whether Marine Mammal Observers are necessary. These costs should be included at the time of grant application.

110. A pdf of the final approved SME/ADF form should be attached to the submission as a Facility Form.
111. Project leads should notify Marine Planning as soon as they have knowledge of their grant funding outcome. If funding is approved, PIs must also confirm funding on the SME/ADF workflow on the Marine Facilities Planning website.
112. Applications must have confirmed funding by 1<sup>st</sup> April to be considered for the following financial year (1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March). Funded applications received after 1<sup>st</sup> April closing date will only be scheduled in the following year's programme on an opportunistic basis if a suitable time window remains and there is enough time to obtain diplomatic clearances. Otherwise, these applications will be carried over to the next year. Publication of the NERC Marine Facilities Programme will occur as soon as possible in the summer/autumn for the following financial year.
113. No research grant involving a ship time application will be allowed to commence until the application has been formally allocated a place in the NERC marine facilities programme unless approval has otherwise been agreed between Marine Planning and the relevant NERC Programme Manager.
114. The RV Prince Madog, operated by the [Prince Madog Offshore Services](#), is run on a pay as you go basis. It is not a NERC Facility, therefore all costs need to be covered by funding secured by the researcher. Queries relating to the vessel, facilities, equipment and technical support should be directed Bangor University, Telephone +44 (0)1248 382902.

#### Applications involving High Performance Computing

115. Grant applications with High Performance Computing (HPC) requirements should indicate in the appropriate place in the Funding Service (TFS) that Research Council Facilities are required and include the relevant facility/ies: ARCHER2 and/or JASMIN.

##### JASMIN

Applicants with particularly large JASMIN storage requirements should raise these at the proposal stage to ensure that requirements can be met in a timely manner, should funding be approved. This is for capacity planning only and is not part of the peer review process. For requirements that exceed 30TB but are under 100TB data storage, applicants should contact the relevant JASMIN Consortium Manager. For requirements in excess of 100TB storage, applicants should contact the JASMIN team. Applicants should be aware that charges will apply for large volumes of storage. Applicants requiring smaller volumes of JASMIN storage are not required to contact the JASMIN team in advance.

##### ARCHER2

Applicants should refer to the following guidance Applying to use high performance computing services – NERC – UKRI and the HPC section of the NERC facilities and resources for the latest information on how to apply for HPC services.

The UK Compute Roadmap was published in July 2025 detailing plans to evolve the UK Compute landscape, and UKRI is working with DSIT to deliver this.

The ARCHER2 service end date is 21 November 2026, and we are currently transitioning to a new UKRI compute landscape. Until details of new compute are confirmed, if you require HPC provision equivalent to ARCHER2 after November 2026, at the application stage, you are advised to select ARCHER2 as a facility and include details of what your compute requirements are. UKRI can then work with you to determine the appropriate UKRI compute as new compute comes online. Alternatively, other UKRI HPC provisions or commercial HPC services, can be explored noting these may be different in remit and access process. Any use of commercial HPC services will require inclusion of full access costs within your application.

Computationally intensive research continues to be of strategic importance to NERC and we strongly encourage applicants to submit proposals requiring HPC access. NERC will ensure proposals requesting HPC will not be disadvantaged through the peer review process during this period of change.

#### Applications involving Cross-Council Large Facilities at Harwell

116. The cross-Council large facilities, [Diamond \(DLS\)](#), [ISIS \(neutron and muon source\)](#), the [Central Lasers Facility \(CLF\)](#) and [Research Complex at Harwell](#) are free at the point of access. Applicants should indicate in the appropriate place on the application which facility is required. Applicants are also required to apply directly to the facility for access.

#### Applications for Antarctic Logistic Support

117. Logistic support in Antarctica for NERC-funded projects is provided by the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), which is a NERC Research Centre. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the agreement of BAS, will NERC sanction funding applicants to negotiate their own logistic arrangements with a commercial operator. In the event that BAS cannot support the fieldwork as proposed, applicants will be advised of what is feasible, thereby enabling the application to be modified accordingly. Very occasionally, the proposed logistics cannot be supported because it is evident that an unacceptably high level of risk is inherent in the plan. At its discretion, BAS may broker arrangements with other national Antarctic operators, or commercial logistic providers, to facilitate Antarctic fieldwork operations (especially in 'deep field' locations) and to ensure that NERC resources are used in the most efficient and effective manner. Further information regarding Antarctic Logistics Support and submission of [Pre award Operational Support Planning Questionnaires \(OSPQ\)](#) will be available within each funding opportunity.
118. Reminders of the deadlines will be posted within each funding opportunity and on the BAS website. OSPQ are considered by a logistics panel, convened at BAS, shortly after the deadline for receipt of those requests. In all cases, feedback will be provided to the applicants, by the Antarctic Access Office (AAO).
119. If your proposed project is entirely ship-based, there is no need for you to submit a Pre award OSPQ. Instead, you should contact NERC Marine Planning ([marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:marineplanning@nerc.ukri.org)) at an early stage to discuss your project planning requirements before completing a Ship-time and Marine Equipment (SME) application form. If your activity is both field and ship-based you will need to complete the Pre award OSPQ and an SME form.

120. Subject to the logistic requests receiving approval, the AAO will send applicants a feedback letter containing the Pre award OSPQ and listed under Research Council Facilities as Antarctic Logistic Support . The reference number and approval date of the Antarctic logistic requests should be clearly stated in the relevant sections of TFS.
121. Approval of the Antarctic logistics requests will be valid for a 12-month period from the date of application to BAS. Any funding applications that request Antarctic logistic support without having received prior logistic approval will not be accepted by NERC.
122. There are different types of [costs for Antarctic fieldwork](#) which are treated differently on the grant. Applicants are advised to discuss their detailed requirements with Will Mossman, e-mail [afibas@bas.ac.uk](mailto:afibas@bas.ac.uk) at the NERC Antarctic Access Office.

#### Assessment of Applications

123. Information on the [assessment of applications](#) can be found on the UKRI website within each individual funding opportunity.

## Section G – MONITORING AND REPORTING

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Final Expenditure Statements

124. [Reporting your project's spending](#)

Annual Reporting of Output and Performance Measures (OPM)

125. [Reporting your project's outcomes – UKRI](#)

## Section H - ENGAGING THE PUBLIC WITH NERC SCIENCE COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

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### Why you should engage with the public

126. NERC is committed to engaging the public with the science it funds, a commitment that is set out in the Higher Education & Research Act 2017 and endorsed in the UKRI [Statement of Expectation on Economic and Societal Impact](#). NERC award holders have a responsibility to consider where best to engage the public (non-researchers, such as the public, journalists, schoolchildren, teachers, industry and policy-makers) with their research.
127. Public engagement describes “the myriad of ways in which the activity and benefits of research can be shared with the public. Engagement is by definition a two-way process, involving interaction and listening, with the goal of generating mutual benefit.” Engaged research is meaningful for both parties and encompasses interactions over any or all stages of the research process (from issue formation to evaluation and dissemination). There are a number of courses available to increase knowledge and skills in public engagement and communications.
128. Public engagement activities can achieve economic and societal impacts. Researchers can request resources and time to undertake relevant public engagement activities to achieve impact. Applicants should outline their ideas for outcome-focussed engagement in the applications Vision and Approach sections.

Public engagement work should be reported annually through the ResearchFish system.

Refer to the [NERC public engagement webpages](#) or contact the [NERC engagementteam](#) for more information or advice about public engagement.

### Media and communications

129. Award holders are asked to inform the UKRI press office of planned media activities to promote NERC-funded research and share any notable coverage of NERC-funded research. Grant holders can either contact the UKRI press office directly or ask your research institute’s communications team to share press releases and media plans with the UKRI press office in good time. The UKRI communications team is keen to support the media engagement work of all the award holders and research institutes that receive its funding, and can do so through a range of channels to maximise the impact of communications about NERC-funded environmental research. For further information contact:

General enquiries: [communications@ukri.org](mailto:communications@ukri.org)

Press enquiries only: [press@ukri.org](mailto:press@ukri.org)

If the grant award involves Antarctic Logistic Support by the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), award-holders are asked to inform the BAS press, public relations and education office (email: [lmca@bas.ac.uk](mailto:lmca@bas.ac.uk)).

130. Award holders are asked to contact the UKRI press office when they have a paper

accepted for publication and advise of the date of publication and any media promotion (as above).

Tag @NERCscience if promoting NERC-funded research on Twitter or Instagram and email [socialmedia@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:socialmedia@nerc.ukri.org) for further information about NERC's digital channels.

Researchers often have to deal with contentious issues. Speaking to journalists or a questioning public in these circumstances can be intimidating. The UKRI communications team can offer advice, guidance and support. For further information contact: [press@ukri.org](mailto:press@ukri.org).

## Websites

131. Websites can be an ideal way to communicate with certain audiences but should only be developed if there is a clear goal and audience in mind. The Research Organisation's communications team might be able to assist with developing websites. Public-facing websites should meet level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 as a minimum, and award holders should consider their ability to meet these when developing new content. The GOV.UK's guidelines on understanding WCAG 2.1 may be helpful.

## Section I - PUBLICATION OF WORK

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### Publication of Work/Open Source Software (OSS)

132. NERC attaches great importance to the dissemination of results and all NERC award-holders are expected to publish the results of their research in the appropriate journals. They are, however, invited to consult NERC if other arrangements seem desirable. All published papers should acknowledge any support received from NERC and should cite the award reference number(s) using the following form of words: "This work was supported by the Natural Environment Research Council [NERC grant reference number xxx]. This is essential in helping to publicise the work of NERC and providing an indicator of the success of the investment. Please help us to ensure continued funding for environmental science research remains a priority by acknowledging NERC when you publicise your research project.
133. It is important, when formulating an application for a grant, that sufficient time for the preparation of manuscripts is incorporated into the design and timing of the proposed project.
134. NERC is committed to the principles articulated in the [UKRI Policy on Open Access](#) and to ensuring that the ideas and knowledge derived from its research, survey and monitoring activities are made available as widely, rapidly and effectively as practicable. The most up to date guidance is available on the [UKRI open research website](#).
135. NERC reserves the right of access to all unpublished papers, records, or collections resulting from the work carried out under an award, some of which may be required to be deposited with NERC. Similarly, NERC reserves the right to use information on the outcome of fellowships, grants or studentships in annual reports, strategic plans, and for scientific and financial audit, and may from time to time require current and former award holders to provide detailed information on the results of work funded.
136. NERC funded projects that aim to produce software outputs must specify a proposed software exploitation route at the start of the project. At completion of a project, the software must be exploited either commercially, within an academic community or as OSS.

### Deposition of organisms in culture collections

137. Where published work includes the description of new species or subspecies or other novel organisms, project leads are expected to make these available to other researchers through deposition in a recognised culture collection. Recognised collections are considered to be those which publish catalogues of holdings and which make organisms available for sale to all UK researchers with appropriate expertise.
138. Organisms should be offered to the most appropriate UK culture collection. If no UK collection is able to accept them, they should be offered to a recognised overseas collection. If no collections will accept the organisms it is expected that the project lead should make them available to the scientific community for a minimum period of 2 years

following publications of any paper describing those organisms.

139. Project leads should note that the requirements of intellectual property rights may mean that organisms may have to be lodged in a culture collection registered for this purpose under the 1977 Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the purpose of Patent Procedure.

## Section J – EXPLOITATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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140. NERC is committed to turning scientific and technological knowledge in universities and other research organisations into commercial success for the benefit of the UK. NERC has a strategy to improve the commercialisation of NERC science and activities in our research centres. Recipients of NERC funding must endeavour to ensure that the outcomes of research are exploited and used to the advantage of the UK. Commercialisation includes contributing to new products and services and the management of intellectual property rights as outlined below.
141. Scientific research gives rise to inventions such as new devices, materials or processes, ideas, know-how and other results which are often manifest as data. Such products are referred to as intellectual property. It is NERC's policy that any such intellectual property generated from NERC supported research should be exploited. However, NERC's policy requires that intellectual property rights be properly conferred on all parties. It is the responsibility of project leads to respect the intellectual property of others when used in their research (for example models) and to accord it all appropriate recognition.
142. Refer to the [UKRI Grant Terms and Conditions](#).
143. Further information on [commercialisation and intellectual property \(IP\)](#) is provided on the the UKRI website.
144. NERC [Environmental Data Centres](#) will give advice on issues relating to charging, licensing and exploitation of datasets. NERC policy in this area is described in more detail in the [NERC Data Policy](#) and the accompanying Guidance notes.

## ANNEX A – FURTHER INFORMATION

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### Contact Points

Queries relating to the TFS system should be directed to the [TFS Helpdesk](#).

All queries concerning maintenance and updates to existing grants (research grants, fellowships and training grants) should be directed to the [UKRI Grants Team](#).

For advice on specific scientific issues, contact the NERC Programme Manager for the appropriate research area, which are listed on the website.

### Other Webpages:

[NERC Science Remit](#)

[UKRI Funding Finder](#)

[UKRI policies and standards](#)

[Managing conflicts of interest in peer review](#)