




Natural
Environment
Research Council

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Opening up the Environment 2025

Funding opportunity applicant webinar.
26 February 2025

A large, five-pointed purple star with a black outline, positioned on the right side of the slide. It is set against a background of green and white abstract patterns.

Webinar
is being
recorded

Agenda

1 Introduction

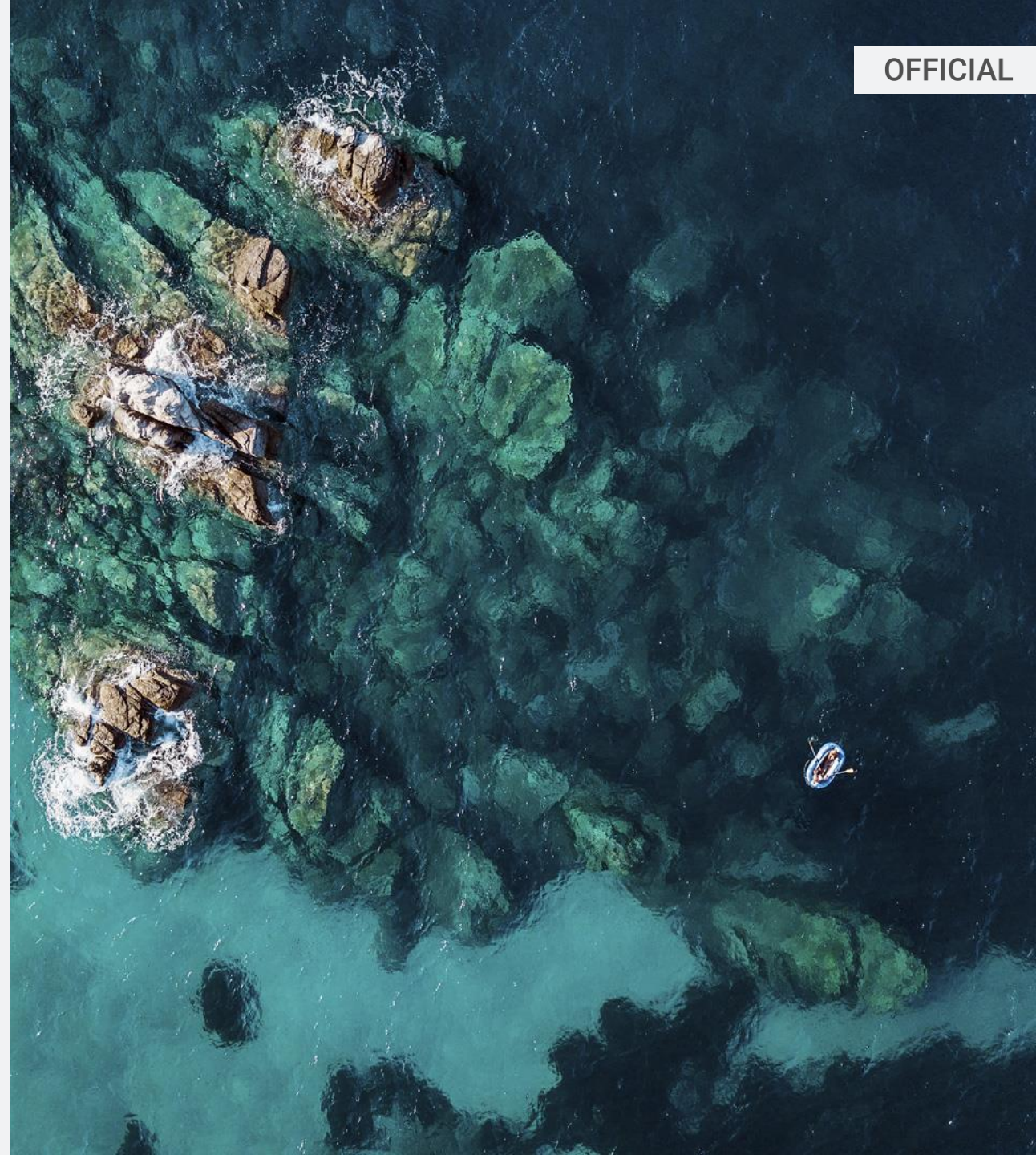
Welcome and introduction from Dr Tracy Shimmield, Interim Director of Research & Skills, NERC [pre-recorded]

2 Funding opportunity information

Presentation on the Opening up the Environment 2025 funding announcement from Hannah Lacey

3 Q&A

Opportunity for questions and answers regarding the funding opportunity





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Opening up the Environment 2025 Funding opportunity

Key information

Successful applications to Opening up the Environment (OutE) 2025 will be able to apply for the next stage of funding: Opening up the Environment (OutE) 2026.

OutE 2026 funding opportunity is invite only. Pre-announcement is on UKRI funding finder now.

OutE 2026 key details:

- Funding to deliver the required activities as identified in OutE 2025
- 2 years of delivery (April 2026 – March 2028)
- Maximum award amount: £708,750 – NERC will fund 80% FEC

OutE 2025 Key information

Total fund available: up to £1,000,000

Maximum award per application: £62,500

Award holders: up to 20 pilot grants

Closing date: 4pm 1 April 2025

Panel dates: 10th & 11th June 2025

Projects must start by: 1 July 2025

Projects must end by: 31 March 2026

**IMPORTANT:
NERC will be issuing
statement of project
commitments to enable
project delivery to
start ASAP**

Eligibility: project lead

You must be:

- Have a contract of employment at an eligible organisation
- Employed at a **lecturer (or equivalent) level or above** - this includes non-research staff such as technicians and admin specialists

Any questions on eligibility and proposal fit to scope please email openingup@nerc.ukri.org

Please refer to the UKRI funding finder announcements and links in that webpage for full details.

Eligibility: things to consider

- Individuals can be named on the maximum of 2 applications
- Individuals can be named as project lead on only 1 application
- There is no demand management for this call
- An institution can submit multiple applications; but should consider resource implications if multiple are funded
- Project partners must fund their own involvement. You may want to consider dual roles.
- We can offer disability and accessibility support for applicants during the application and assessment process if required.

Contact:

openingup@nerc.ukri.org

Or

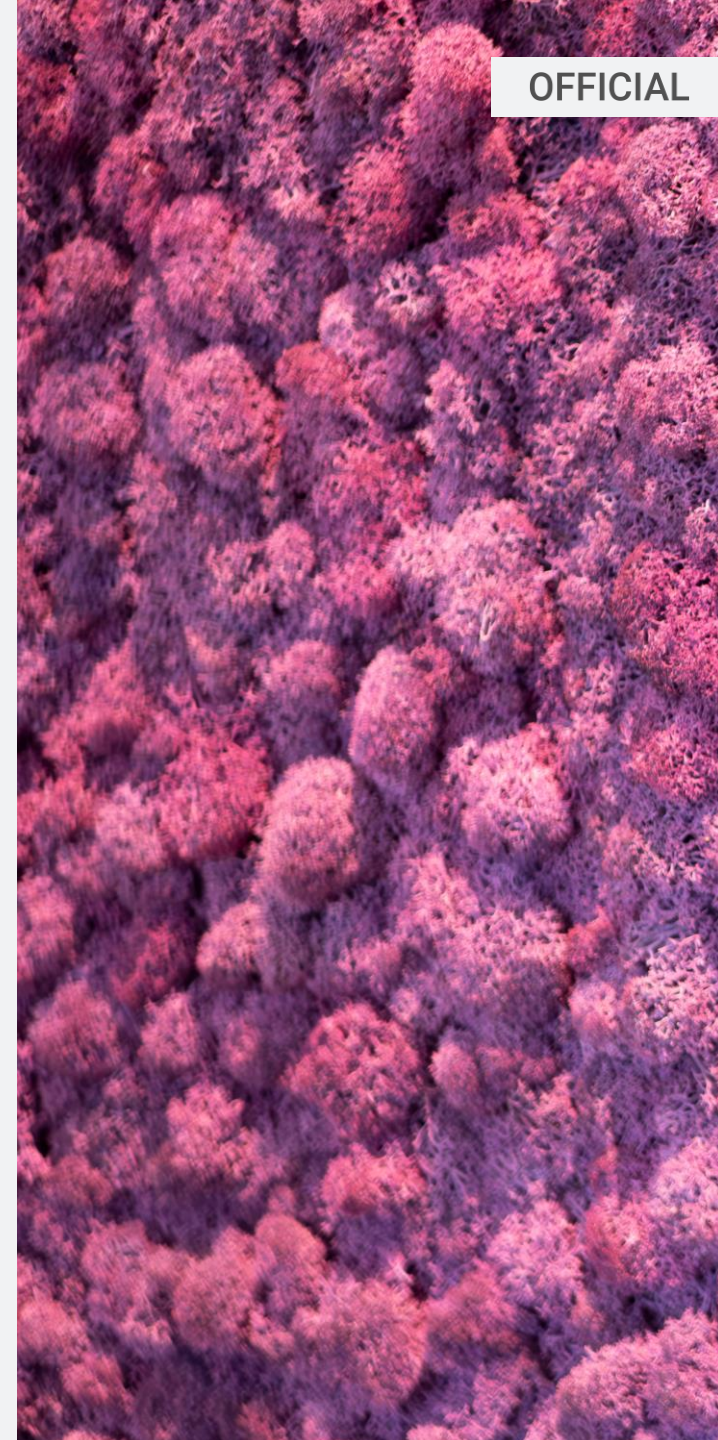
support@fundin-g-service.ukri.org

What we're looking for

- Funding up to 20 pilot grants **that develop partnerships and identify the potential to increase the diversity of representation in the NERC community.**

Projects will:

- set out equitable, inclusive **plans** to identify and include a broader diversity of people in the environmental solutions workforce of the future
- **undertake emerging work to test, scope and pilot approaches** that showcase a broader range of people and skill sets to inspire those who have the potential to be part of the future talent pipeline



Equality Act 2010

NERC recognises that when addressing challenges to creating a more inclusive and diverse workforce, you may be working in areas, and supporting people who would be protected by the Equality Act 2010:

Age * Disability * Gender reassignment * Marriage and civil partnership * Pregnancy and maternity * Race * Religion or belief * Sex * Sexual orientation

As well as these, you could consider other areas such as:

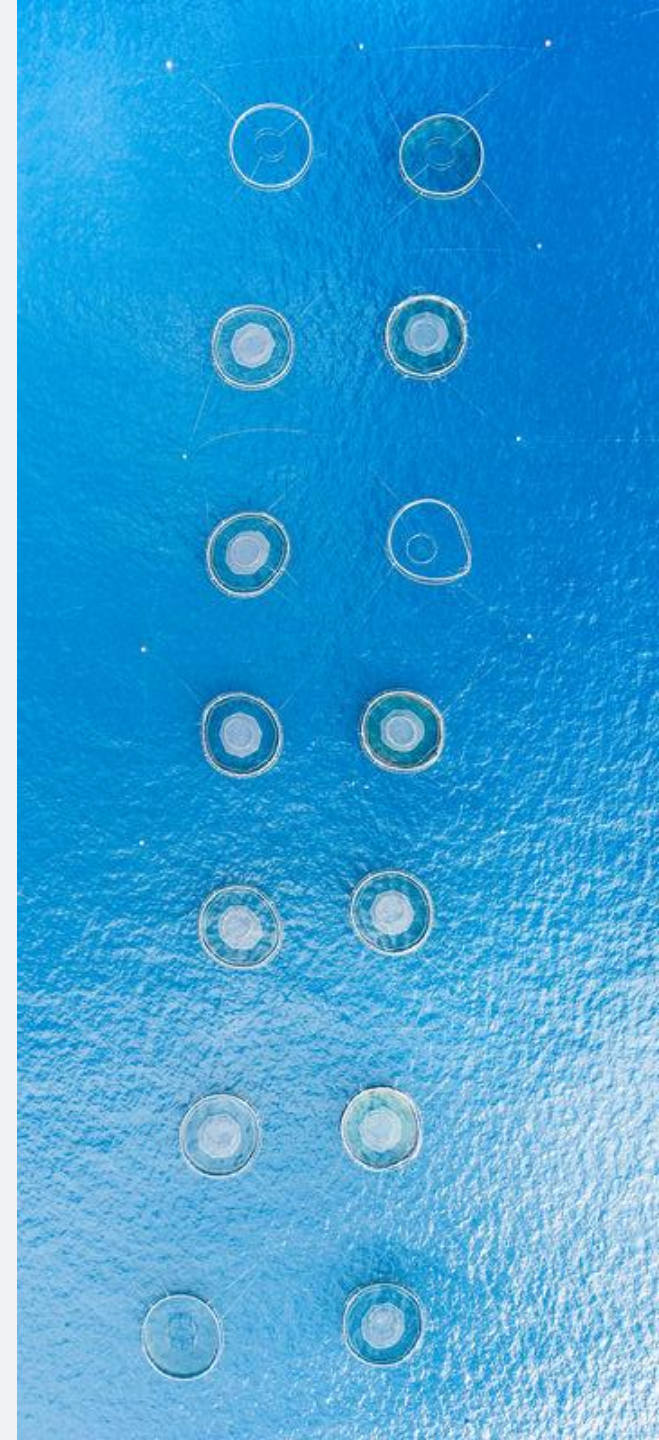
Caring responsibilities * Social mobility * Geographic location * Lived experience * Intersectionality

It is important to note that it **is the project leads organisation that will take on legal responsibility and risk** of work undertaken with this project

Objective: Explore and assess

You will explore and assess the potential your organisation or department has to increase, support and sustain diversity of representation to attract a wider talent pool to create the future research and innovation workforce that will enable and support NERC science.

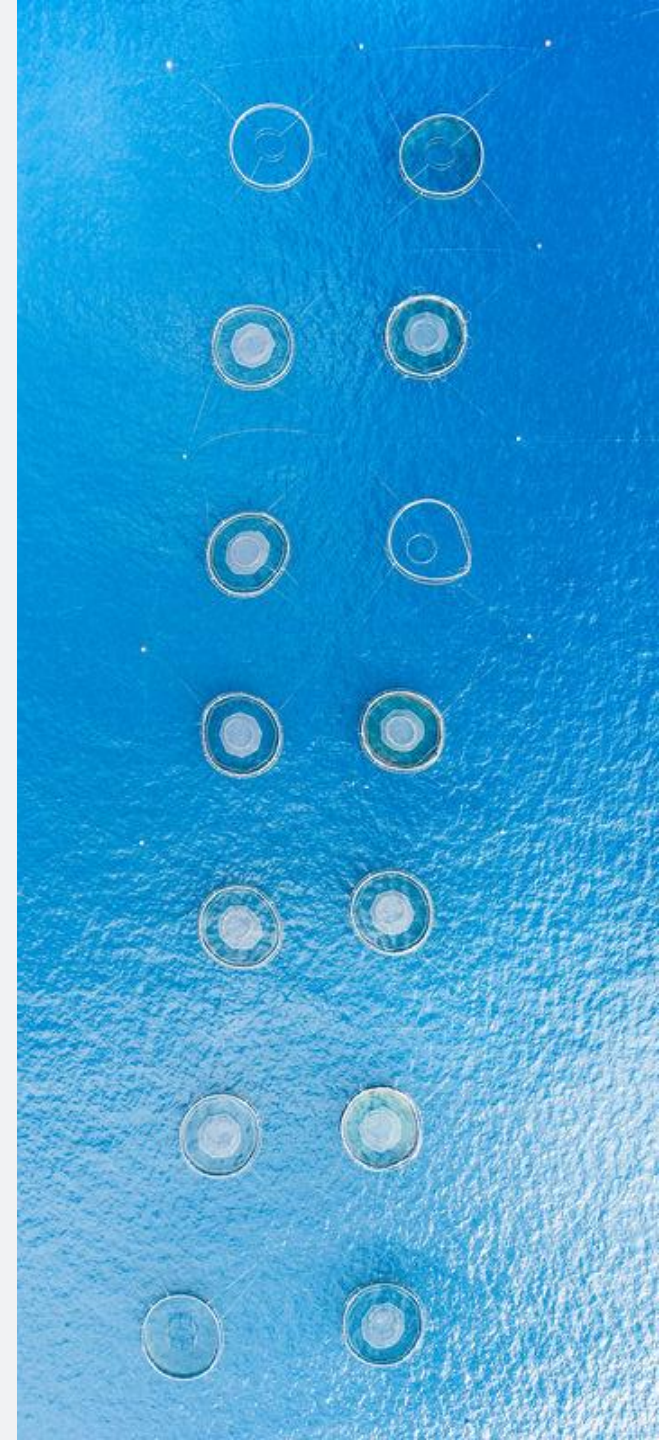
Your self-assessment should identify actionable activity to achieve project ambitions.



Objective: Partnerships

Suitable partnerships could be:

- Between departments or teams within a single organisation
- Between two or more different research organisations
- Between departments at two or more different research organisations
- Between a research organisation and...
 - Charity
 - Local community
 - “feeder” colleges / sixth forms etc.
- Must focus **on UK partnerships**, that contribute towards increasing community diversity

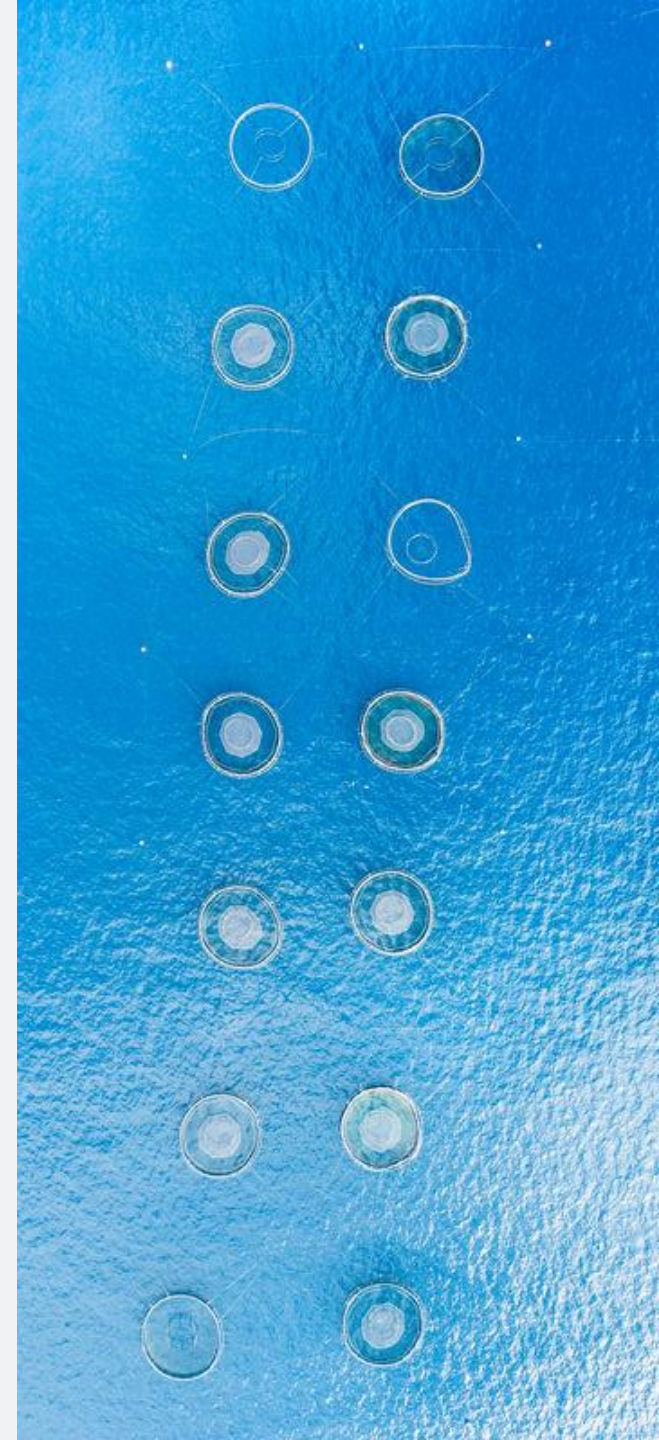


Objective: Partnerships

You will **enhance or form new partnerships** that support the ambitions and actions needed to identify, include, and showcase a broader range of people and skillsets that contribute to delivering NERC science.

Plans will also **consider how to increase the breadth of audiences** who will be exposed to the skillsets and people delivering NERC science.

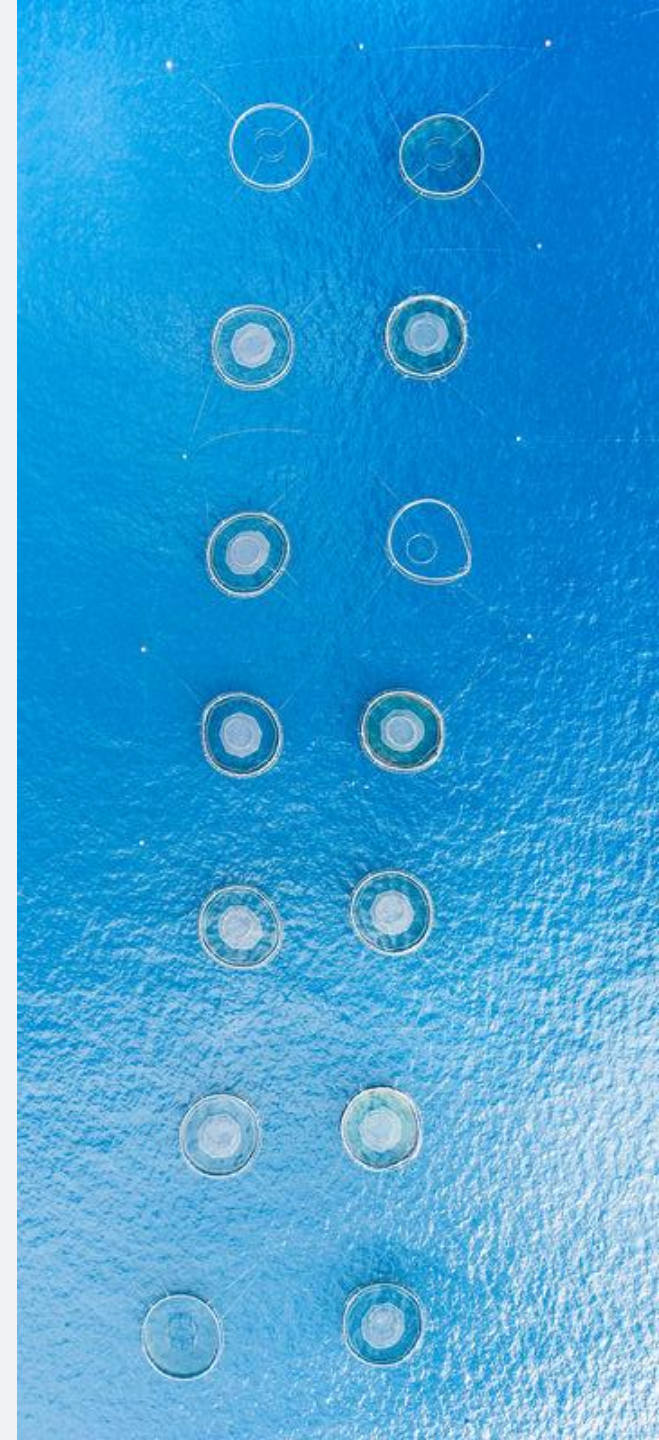
This includes collaborating with other funded projects



Objective: Evaluating impact

You will evaluate the impact of work undertaken from this funding opportunity including sharing relevant lessons learnt, and undertaking evaluation throughout your project.

A short evaluation template will be provided. Your project evaluations must have appropriately allocated resource and an evaluation plan



Writing style

To reduce the potential for unconscious bias in the assessment of your application, you are encouraged to write your answers to the assessment questions so they do not include identifiable information.

Examples:

for full names, use initials instead. For example: instead of writing John Smith or Jane Doe, write J.S or J.D

for pronouns, use gender neutral terms instead. For example: instead of writing “she or he will be responsible for delivery of this project”, write “they will be responsible for the delivery of this project”



Characteristics from previously funded grants

These are areas for you to consider in your application. Characteristics of successfully funded projects include:

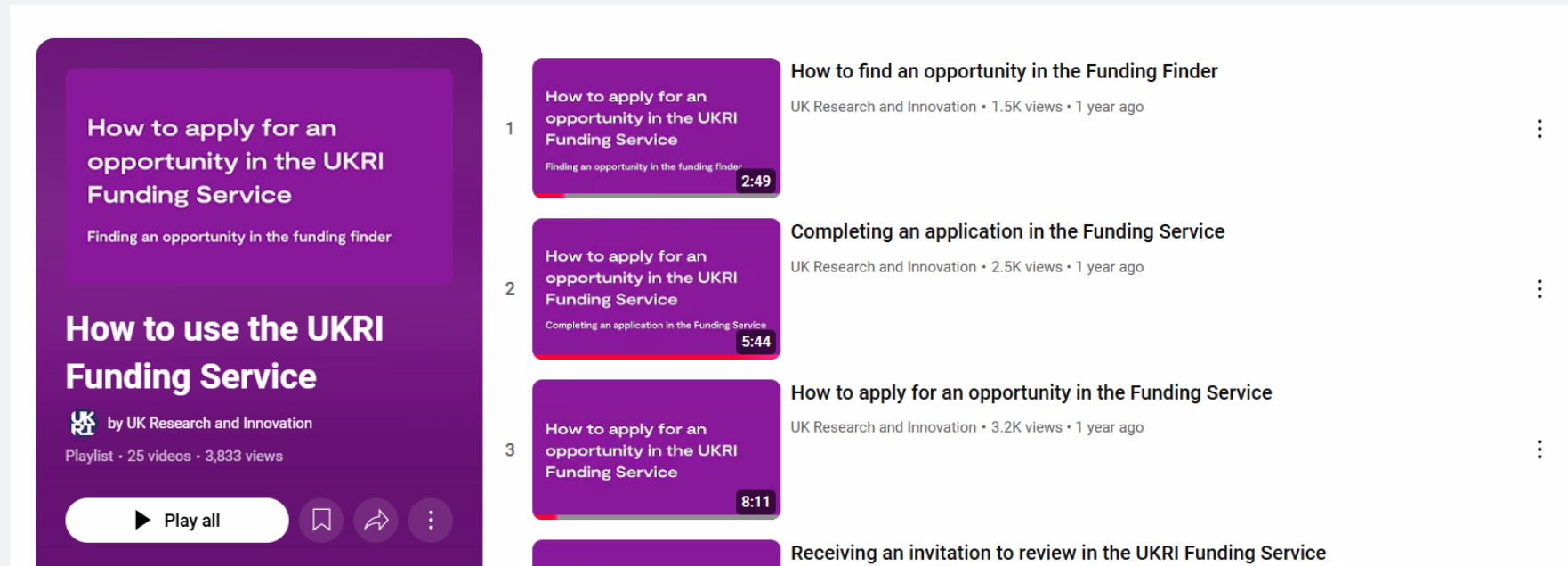
- applications co-written with specialists
- appropriate range of project partners listed and involved in co-designing the project approach
- strong evaluation
- clear specified areas of scope,
- equality, diversity and inclusion well considered throughout the project
- realistic in delivery of project
- impact has been well considered and communicated



Next steps: How to apply

We have now moved funding opportunity applications over to UKRI's Funding Service.

Please check the funding finder announcement for relevant links and support in applying for funds.



The screenshot shows a YouTube playlist interface. On the left is a large purple video player with the title "How to apply for an opportunity in the UKRI Funding Service" and the subtitle "Finding an opportunity in the funding finder". Below it is another video titled "How to use the UKRI Funding Service" by UK Research and Innovation, with 25 videos and 3,833 views. On the right is a list of three video thumbnails:

- 1. "How to apply for an opportunity in the UKRI Funding Service" (Finding an opportunity in the funding finder) - 2:49 duration, 1.5K views, 1 year ago.
- 2. "How to apply for an opportunity in the UKRI Funding Service" (Completing an application in the Funding Service) - 5:44 duration, 2.5K views, 1 year ago.
- 3. "How to apply for an opportunity in the UKRI Funding Service" - 8:11 duration, 3.2K views, 1 year ago.

Below the third thumbnail, the start of a fourth video is visible: "Receiving an invitation to review in the UKRI Funding Service".



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Questions?

Please use the 'question and answer' function
in Microsoft teams

Contact: openingup@nerc.ukri.org