

**NERC 7th Training Advisory Group Meeting
Summary 02 December 2014, London**



This document is a summary of the agenda, discussions and outcomes of the above NERC TAG meeting.

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Minutes
2. Training Activities
3. New NERC Capital Funding Model & Joint Capital Advisory Group (JCAG)
4. Request for evidence: NERC Centres for Doctoral Training
5. NERC Review of Collaborative Studentships
6. Environment YES
7. AOB

Summary of Key Discussions and Questions:

1. *Welcome and Minutes* – N/A
2. *Training Activities* – NERC provided an overview of all current training activities to TAG.

The TAG recommended:

- NERC provide clearer guidance on the difference between DTP CASE and the Industrial CASE competition scheme.
- NERC provide a summary of the training activities offered by the DTPs and how they relate to previously funded Advanced Training Short Courses.
- The international competitiveness of UK students should be discussed at the 8th TAG meeting.

3. *New NERC Capital Funding Model & Joint Capital Advisory Group (JCAG)* – NERC provided an overview of the new capital funding model and the link between new capital investments and training were discussed.

The TAG recommended:

- JCAG should provide an annual updated to TAG.

4. *Request for evidence: NERC Centres for Doctoral Training* – NERC invited TAG to prioritise the Evidence Submissions received in response to the NERC Centres for Doctoral Training Request for Evidence Call.

The TAG agreed that a CDT in the area of ‘Autonomous sensing and smart observations’ should be developed.

The TAG recommended:

- NERC to develop a call for a Centre for Doctoral Training with the following title: *The use of smart and autonomous observation for the environmental sciences*.

5. *NERC Review of Collaborative Studentships* – NERC invited TAG to discuss the five recommendations from the NERC Review of Collaborative Studentships.

Recommendation 1: The CASE scheme supports quality student training and should continue.

Recommendation 2: The placement is an important and defining requirement of CASE studentships and the requirement to undertake a placement must be enforced and monitored.

Recommendation 3: The requirement for non-academic CASE partners to make a £1000 per annum financial contribution to studentships should be maintained but the payment should be made to the Research Organisation rather than directly the student.

Recommendation 4: NERC should provide further clarity in the differences between its two CASE mechanisms (Industrial CASE competition versus CASE studentships funded via doctoral programmes CDTs/DTPs).

Recommendation 5: Current international eligibility rules are suitable.

The TAG agreed with all five recommendations from the review.

The TAG recommended:

- NERC should state in the guidance that the placement is mandatory and improve details of what is expected from the placement. Students should be re-surveyed in two years to assess whether this change in the guidance has had an effect on the number of students undertaking a placement.
- The £1K from the non-academic CASE partner should be maintained but should be paid directly to the RO to support the student.

6. *Environment YES* – NERC invited TAG to review the Environment YES scheme

The TAG agreed that the experience Environment YES provides is valuable but it may not be working for various reasons. It would be useful to see if the DTPs encouraged students to participate.

The TAG recommended:

- The Environment YES scheme should be reviewed at the winter 2015 TAG meeting.

7. *AOB* – N/A