



**Natural  
Environment  
Research Council**

**Application Pack for  
NERC Science Committee  
Members**

**July 2020**

**Closing date for all applications: 25 September 2020  
4pm (GMT)**

**Interviews will take place: 10 & 11 November  
2020**

**Induction: TBC**

**Date of first meeting:  
Members: 3 & 4 February 2021**

# APPLICATION PACK SCIENCE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

NERC - the Natural Environment Research Council - is the driving force of investment in environmental science in the UK. NERC advances the frontier of environmental science by commissioning new research, infrastructure and training that delivers valuable scientific breakthroughs. We do this because understanding our changing planet is vital for our wellbeing and economic prosperity.

We invest public money in world-leading science, designed to help us sustain and benefit from our natural resources, predict and respond to natural hazards and understand environmental change. We work closely with policymakers and industry to make sure our knowledge can support sustainable economic growth and wellbeing in the UK and around the world.

NERC is part of UK Research & Innovation (<https://www.ukri.org/>), a new body which works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish. UKRI aims to maximise the contribution of each of its component parts, working individually and collectively. We work with our many partners to benefit everyone through knowledge, talent and ideas.

We are supported mainly by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), but our activities and funding decisions are independent of government.

For further information on NERC see: [NERC website](#).

## ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NERC SCIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NERC is looking to appoint four members to the NERC Science Committee with expertise as set out in the person specification section.

Science Committee will bring broad strategic perspective and expertise to support the development and delivery of the UKRI-NERC strategic priorities, investments and policies. The Committee will advise the Executive and Council across NERC's research, innovation, training and national capability portfolio, and will recommend NERC strategic research and innovation investments.

Members sit on the Committee as individuals, rather than representing a particular organisation and will provide advice on:

- How to support an excellent and sustainable UK environmental science community that seizes opportunities, in UKRI and international contexts, to achieve the following goals:
  - to advance the frontiers of knowledge;
  - to address government, UKRI and NERC strategic priorities;
  - to deliver beneficial economic and social impacts.
- Priority areas for future rounds of NERC strategic research and innovation investment.
- Commissioning, effectiveness and performance of NERC and UKRI investments including: discovery science; strategic research and innovation; postgraduate training, fellowships and early career support; national capability; scientific infrastructure and capital; international partnership and subscriptions.
- NERC funding policy for all of the above funding streams.

Provide recommendations for new NERC investment:

- Strategic Research and Innovation Programmes – assess submitted proposals against published criteria and recommend which proposals should be funded by NERC.
- Strategic Research and Innovation Highlight Topics - assess submitted ideas for Highlight Topic against published criteria and recommend which should go forward to a funding call, and at what level of expenditure.

The Terms of Reference are available: [Science Committee Terms of Reference](#)

Actions of the Science Committee and its members are subject to the UKRI-NERC governance framework and the seven principles of public life.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Applications are sought from individuals who possess a range of expertise and experience in research and innovation across the higher education sector. You should have a range of subject matter knowledge appropriate to the Council's areas of research, innovation, training and capital, or other lay experience of benefit to NERC's wider strategic ambitions. NERC is seeking broad representation across our community reflecting different characteristics and professional backgrounds.

Our ideal candidate will have energy, enthusiasm and time to commit to advise us on how we can best achieve our [Delivery Plan](#) ambitions. You will also have excellent people and communication skills and the ability to work collaboratively to support and challenge the Science Committee's debates and influence fellow members.

### **Essential Skills**

We are seeking candidates that have one or more of the following specialisms:

- Understanding of the environmental challenges confronting the world based on a deep understanding of environmental science with a whole-systems, solution-focused approach.
- Insights to support NERC's ambitions to be UKRI lead for environmental sustainability.
- A first-rate environmental scientist:
  - the following backgrounds would be particularly welcome at this time:
    - Environmental influences on Human Health
    - Earth sciences, particularly solid Earth
- Experience in strategic planning and pre-sight of large investment portfolios and programmes involving some or all of: research; innovation; training and skills; scientific infrastructures and services; international partnership.

### **Desirable Skills**

- Experience of working across disciplinary boundaries within environmental science and across UKRI organisations.
- Knowledgeable about environmental research for international development
- Knowledge of the reach of Environmental Science across UKRI, and its national and international partners.
- Strategic knowledge of user needs (business, policy, other) and the application of environmental research and innovation for economic and societal benefit.

The total time commitment for Science Committee members is expected to be up to 20 days pa.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

The successful candidates will be appointed by the Natural Environment Research Council, on the recommendation of a selection panel.

UKRI-NERC is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and welcomes applications from all. Applications from women, those with a disability, members of minority ethnic groups, and groups currently under-represented at senior levels in the research and innovation community, are therefore especially encouraged.

NERC is proud to be a user of the disability confident scheme. We guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for any of our vacancies.

The members will be appointed for a period of two years with a possible two-year extension.

## **MEETING ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Availability**

The successful candidate will be expected to participate in all formal Science Committee meetings (4 per year).

The successful candidate will be expected to participate in the Council Retreat (once a year)

For meetings to be quorate there must be at least half the Committee members in attendance.

### **Location**

Meeting will be held in various UK locations

## **HONORARIUM**

An attendance fee per day of £170, together with reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be paid (where eligible).

## HOW TO APPLY AND HOW MEMBERS WILL BE SELECTED

To apply, candidates should **submit a CV (limited to two sides) and a completed application form** to Gemma Davies ([SwindonGDSAdmin@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:SwindonGDSAdmin@nerc.ukri.org)) by **4pm (GMT) on 25 September 2020**. If you have any questions about the recruitment process, please also contact Gemma Davies.

Once the deadline has passed, all applications (CV and application form) will be acknowledged and then passed to the selection panel (see below) to review the applications against the person specification. The panel will agree which applicants will be selected for interview. Further particulars will be provided to candidates selected for interview.

At the final appointment stages, where applicants are as qualified on merit, the selection panel will seek to achieve a balanced membership in terms of, for example, diversity, expertise and experience.

The selection panel for the Members of Science Committee appointments will be:

- Chair of NERC Science Committee
- NERC Director, Research and Skills
- Member(s) of NERC Science Committee

The timescale for selection and appointments are in the tables below.

Activity	Timing
Role advertised	08 July 2020
Deadline for applications	25 September 2020
Shortlisting decisions sent to candidates	27 October 2020
Interviews	10 & 11 November 2020
Appointments confirmed	November 2020
First meeting	3 & 4 February 2021

**Please send the completed application, stating clearly the appointment you are applying for, to:**

By email: [SwindonGDSAdmin@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:SwindonGDSAdmin@nerc.ukri.org) Attention of: Gemma Davies

By post:  
Attention of: Gemma Davies  
Natural Environment Research Council  
(NERC) Polaris House  
North Star  
Avenue Swindon,  
SN2 1EU

## **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way.

Consistent with the Commissioner's Code of Practice, applicants will be assessed on merit, and all candidates for public appointment will need to uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life. These will be tested as part of the selection process and the selection Panel must satisfy itself that all candidates for appointments can meet these standards; which are:

### **Selflessness**

Holders of Public Office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

Carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.