

Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement for April 2017 - March 2018

NERC - the Natural Environment Research Council - is the leading funder of independent research, training and innovation in environmental science in the UK. We have over 2500 employees and work with many more people in the UK and world-wide. We have an annual income of around £500m per annum.

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.

During 2017-18 NERC was mainly supported by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The coming year will see significant change to the funding landscape in which NERC operates. As set out in the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, the creation of a new organisation – UK Research and Innovation – took place in April 2018. Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6bn, UKRI brings together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and a new body, Research England. The 2018-19 Annual Statement will be published by UKRI.

NERC is committed to the principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the abolition of modern slavery and human trafficking. NERC maintains a Code of Conduct, policies on Corporate Responsibility and Whistleblowing as part of a wider suite of policies, all of which are easily accessible by all NERC staff. We review these policies on a cyclical basis.

NERC designs our recruitment and people management processes to ensure that all prospective employees are legally entitled to work in the UK and to safeguard employees from any abuse or coercion once in our employment.

NERC's primary role as a funder of independent research, training and innovation means that its supply chain includes NERC funded grants, National Capability and research contracts to (approved/eligible) research organisations (both nationally and internationally). These research organisations are subject to due diligence checks to monitor their compliance with applicable law including in relation to slavery and human trafficking.

NERC's procurement for goods and services is supported by our shared services provider, UK SBS. Our supply chain is extensive and we procure goods and services from a wide range of UK and overseas suppliers. The UK SBS have published their statement on Slavery & Human Trafficking, which includes their mechanisms for guarding against modern slavery in their client's supply chains. The [UK SBS statement](#) is published on its website.

Over the past 12 months, NERC has undertaken the following activities:

- Rolled out an e-learning course for all staff to be completed by March 2019.
- Worked with the seven Research Councils, Research England, Innovate UK and UK SBS and UKRI to produce a UKRI-wide anti-slavery and human trafficking policy.
- Updated existing RCUK grant terms and conditions ahead of the inception of UKRI.



UK Research
and Innovation

No reports were received from employees, the public, or law enforcement agencies to indicate that modern slavery practices have been identified.

Over the next 12 months NERC will focus on, as part of UKRI, the following areas:

- Due diligence procedures regarding human trafficking and slavery in our supply chain
- Identifying where the biggest risk are and the steps to diminish these risks
- Demonstrating that human trafficking and slavery is not taking place in the NERC element of the UKRI supply chain

The NERC Management Board approved this statement on 17 October 2018.

Paul Fox

NERC Chief Operating Officer