NERC Public Engagement with Research Strategy

Embedding engagement grant

Announcement of Opportunity

Key dates

**Monday 30 September 2019, 16:00 (GMT):** Closing date to confirm applicant’s intention to apply and send completed proposal, via email, to Hannah King (publicengagement@nerc.ukri.org).

Summary

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is inviting proposals for projects to demonstrate existing or planned activity at eligible research organisations, which align with or support the new NERC Public Engagement with Research Strategy. We intend to fund up to fifteen, projects costing between £2,000 and £5,000. The closing date for proposals is 16:00 (GMT), Monday 30 September 2019.

Background

The success of NERC’s new Public Engagement with Research Strategy deeply relies on our partners and stakeholders that we create and collaborate with. This includes ensuring that it assists institutions, which enable engaged research to thrive. To support this we are inviting proposals for small projects, which will demonstrate how the NERC Public Engagement with Research Strategy with research aligns with activity that our community and institutions are and plan to be delivering.

Successful proposals will receive between £2000 and £5000 to deliver the project between November 2019 and March 2020. One-page proposals for projects must be submitted by 16:00 Monday 30 September 2019. Shortlisted projects will be invited to present their proposal on Tuesday 15 October and will be advised on the day if they have been successful.

Scope

**Desired Outcomes**

1. Raise the profile of research where the priorities of NERC’s new Public Engagement with Research Strategy and priorities of applicants’ institutions overlap.
   2. In the context of the new NERC Public Engagement Strategy, institutions will understand:
      - Key researchers in their institutions involved in public engagement with environmental science and how networks can be strengthened/set up
      - How to better support public engagement with environmental science research
      - Who is already carrying out excellent public engagement with environmental science research and how to raise the profile of their work
      - How to fully evaluate public engagement with environmental science research and use the learnings

**Some suggested activities (not exhaustive)**

- Map out key stakeholders in environmental science public engagement
- Assess support for public engagement with environmental science research (for example, using the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)’s [EDGE tool](https://www.edge-tool.org)).
- Create of network(s) focussed on delivery against Public Engagement with Research Strategy
- Address barriers to current NERC researchers delivering public engagement with research
- Support NERC researchers to plan for public engagement with research, including preparing to request support (such as through Pathways to Impact)
- Raise the profile of NERC researchers already carrying out engaged research, including in 2021 Research Excellence Framework, where relevant
- Build profile of public engagement with environmental science relevant to identified stakeholders/audiences
• Application or plans to apply for the Engage Watermark, with a focus on public engagement with environmental science research.
• Shared evaluation and meaningful legacy
• Development of a tool/method for sharing plans/activities for public engagement in environmental science across centres and/or institutions

Additional leverage
Applicants may include additional leveraged funding as part of their submission from appropriate sources. Applicants must clearly state the source and amount of any existing leveraged funding (in-kind or cash).

Proposal requirements
Eligibility
• Proposals will be accepted from applicants (Principal Investigators) who are normally eligible for NERC grants, based within eligible research organisations.
• Principal investigators or co-investigators must be able to attend the peer assessment event on Tuesday 15 October 2019.
• Successful projects must start, as a condition of funding, no later than 1 November 2019 and be completed by 31 March 2020.
• Any activities must be free at the point of access for public audiences.
• Applicants to this call may submit only one proposal as the lead contact.

Application Process
How to apply
Applicants are required to confirm their intention to apply and send completed proposal, via email, to Hannah King (publicengagement@nerc.ukri.org) by 16:00 (GMT), Monday 30 September 2019.

The proposal must be as a one-page single PDF proposal document, and must include the following information:
• Overview information (lead contact, job role, organisation and department, email, phone, number, full name and organisation of all co-applicants)
• Project title (up to 150 characters)
• Project summary (2000 characters)
• Objectives/intended outcomes: describe the project objectives and how you will meet these
• Management and planning: outline a plan for project delivery. Please describe briefly how those involved have relevant knowledge and experience to deliver.
• Total funding requested from NERC, and any leveraged funding.

Funding - what can be requested?
Proposals can include fully justified direct costs incurred in delivering the project. This may include, for example:
• Staff resources (including administration and coordination, contributions to salaries (where a named individual will undertake work that would not be considered part of their normal duties), sub-contracting of services, enabling public/community partners to take part)
• Non-staff resources (including cost of materials and travel & subsistence, meetings and events, consumables, materials and equipment, evaluation costs)
Funding – what cannot be requested?
The budget and costings must be based on valid estimates. Funding will not be provided for:

- Estate and in-direct costs.
- Fees or honoraria to people already in paid employment to deliver activities where such activities would reasonably be undertaken as part of their normal duties.
- Retrospective funding, including those projects with a start date after the closing date but before the funding decisions are announced.
- Infrastructure/building costs.
- Expenses incurred submitting the application.
- Academic courses such as Master’s degrees or PhDs, and other tuition fees.

This call is funded outside of Full Economic Costing (FEC) rules.

Further information on the application procedure can be found in the NERC research grants and fellowships handbook. Please note that in cases where this call makes exception to the handbook (for example on eligibility) these exceptions are explained in this call document.

Assessment

Assessment Process
There is a one-stage assessment process for this call. Applicants will be invited to present their proposal in a 5-minute presentation (no slides) to for peer assessment at an event on Tuesday 15 October 2019 (this will follow on from NERC’s Strategy Consultation event).

Assessment will be based on peer voting from other applicants. All applicants will vote for their top projects (not including their own). The number of votes for each project will be counted, the projects will be ranked and the top projects within the funding frame will receive funding. Projects must receive at least one vote to receive funding.

Applicants will peer assess proposals based on the assessment criteria below.

NERC will use the recommendations of the peer assessment along with the overall call requirements and the available budget in making the final funding decisions.

Feedback to applicants will be provided via the peer assessment process.

NERC reserves the right not to fund up to the limit allocated to the call and to make changes to the budgetary limits of the successful grants.

Assessment Criteria
Proposals will be assessed on the overall fit to the desired outcomes of the call and potential for impact.

Timeline

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 July-7 September</td>
<td>Strategy consultation period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 30 September</td>
<td>Deadline to confirm intention and send completed proposal to apply</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 15 October</td>
<td>Strategy consultation event and peer assessment for Embedding engagement grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 15 October</td>
<td>Successful applicants informed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday 1 November</td>
<td>Projects must start by this date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 31 March</td>
<td>Projects must be complete and project evaluations submitted</td>
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Contact
Please contact Hannah King (publicengagement@nerc.ukri.org).