Environmental Science Collaborative Research Project(s)
NERC Wales Showcase 2021
Guidance for Applications

1. Call information – Proof-of-Concept Public Engagement Awards (up to £30,000)

Overview
This call will support environmental science collaborative research project(s) and is open to NERC researchers working in, on or with Wales. The project seeks to create knowledge collaboratively through NERC researchers and members of the public working together on research projects. Researchers can engage people in any or all parts of their research process, from setting the research questions, through to sharing the results, or anything in between.

This exciting call will consider applications for the development, delivery and evaluation of a collaborative environmental sciences research project(s) with a defined public community or group.

NERC intends to fund projects costing between £10,000 and £30,000, up to a total of £60,000 (including 1-3 projects costing up to a total of £30,000 for Cardiff University applicants and 1-3 projects costing up to a total of £30,000 for those not based at Cardiff University). Successful projects must be completed by 30 September 2021. The closing date for applications is 16:00, Thursday 29 October 2020.

The call is part of NERC Wales Showcase 2021 and is being ran in partnership with Cardiff University.

Support for researchers
You are invited to attend an Environmental Science Collaborative Research Project(s) (NERC Wales Showcase 2021) online learning event at 10:30-12:00pm on Thursday 1 October 2020 to explore this exciting opportunity. Please note, this is not compulsory and the online event will be filmed to ensure accessibility. The event will support applicants to shape a submission. Guidance and support will be provided throughout the application development, delivery and evaluation process to ensure competitive applications and quality public engagement outcomes.

For more information on developing public engagement projects please see suggested guidelines on the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement.

Eligibility
- Applications are invited from NERC researchers working in, on or with Wales
- Applications will be accepted from applicants who are normally eligible for NERC grants, based within eligible research organisations. Applications must be within NERC's remit, but may include partnerships with other researchers across academic disciplines beyond NERC remit.
- Applications must have a permanent member of staff as a principle investigator or co-investigator
• Non-permanent early career researchers, from postdoctoral research associate upwards, can be principle investigator on applications, but must have a permanent member of staff as co-investigator who will also support the public engagement activity. A team structure will also need to be detailed to develop, deliver and evaluate the project proposed. Applications also need to provide evidence of agreement that they have time to deliver the award from their current line manager.

**Funding - what can be requested?**
Applications 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 and subsistence, meetings and events, consumables, materials and equipment, evaluation costs)

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).

**Funding – what cannot be requested?**
The budget and costings must be based on valid estimates. Funding will not be provided for:

- Estates 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 funding call 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.

**Objectives for NERC**
- To deliver current high-quality example(s) of collaborative research
- To increase the quality and longevity of current collaborative research
- To enable communities in Wales to participate in environmental science research, and participants feel their contributions were valued and listened to, and researchers recognised their skills, assets and perspective
- To raise the profile of natural environment research

**Sustainability**
Applications should also consider the sustainability of the project, in-line with NERC’s **current approach**: sustainability for NERC is all about creating and nurturing an environment and culture in which social, economic and environmental responsibility is
embedded, balancing the needs of the NERC community and our stakeholders, including immediate needs and those of future generations.

**Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)**
As well as the key legal requirements, applicants should consider how they will address specific needs related to EDI. As part of this, applicants must:

- Ensure that all imagery in public engagement is diverse and inclusive, so that the public and other external stakeholders see NERC as an inclusive, welcoming community
- Ensure effective engagement with a broad range of communities, so NERC funded public engagement activity is more inclusive
- Consider the accessibility needs of people they work with to ensure that everyone who wants to is able to engage with NERC engagement activity e.g. wheelchair accessibility of venues, subtitles, British Sign Language (BSL) translation where appropriate etc.

More information about [NERC’s EDI approach](#) can be found online.

**Dates to note**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 17 September 2020</td>
<td>Calls information published and call opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 1 October 2020, 10:30 – 12:00</td>
<td>Collaborative research support session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 29 October 2020, 16:00</td>
<td>Calls closes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 18 December 2020</td>
<td>Candidate notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date to be confirmed</td>
<td>NERC Wales Showcase 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May-5 June 2021</td>
<td>Urdd Eisteddfod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 July-7 August 2021</td>
<td>National Eisteddfod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 September 2021</td>
<td>Project funding ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 September 2021</td>
<td>Evaluation submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Evidence for impact shared</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact**
Contact Carl Smith, Cardiff University College Engagement Officer or Hannah King, NERC Senior Public Engagement Programme Manager for further information.

**2. Application Guidance and Top Tips**

Application forms should be submitted to [ISSFPE@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:ISSFPE@cardiff.ac.uk) by **16:00, Thursday 29 October 2020**.

The application has different sections, which the panel will use to assess your public engagement project. **You must use the suggested word limit.**

**3. Application Process & Review**
All applications should be submitted on the appropriate application form, with attention paid to the requirements for each section. Please note that additional information/appendices are not allowed, with the exception of those listed in the application form, and will be excluded from the application at review. Applicants must not exceed the permitted word count for each section (including table and figure legends); if they do, the application will not be considered at the Panel. Similarly, a lack of detailed justification of public engagement costs will result in the application not being submitted to the panel.

All applications will be reviewed by an experienced and representative panel, including people from within and outside environmental science research, equality, diversity and inclusion specialists, partner organisation and public engagement specialists. For these panels we aim to ensure representation across scientific expertise, diversity and seniority. Early career researchers may attend these panels as observers, and be provided with lay summaries (in confidence) to help them learn more about grant reviewing processes.

Proposals will be considered on the following criteria:
- Overall fit to the desired outcomes of the call and potential for impact
- Alignment to UKRI Public Engagement Vision, and the NERC Public Engagement with Research and Innovation Strategy
- Value for money
- The quality of engagement looking at the following aspects:
  - The intention of the engagement
  - Quality of mutual benefit
  - Quality of engagement
  - Sustainability of engagement

Strategic decisions when applications are tied for funding will be made based on NERC public engagement with research priority. 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. The panel may also recommend amendments to your application and approach to ensure a high-quality collaborative research project(s) is developed, delivered and evaluated.

4. Governance and Panellists

Panellists undergo equality and diversity training to ensure a fair and transparent assessment process.

Panels provide recommended decisions which require ratification by the NERC executive. Panellists will be expected to follow guidance, including around confidentiality and conflict of interest. The contact for all queries relevant to applications, panels and outcomes is via smithc32@cardiff.ac.uk.

We hope to ensure that all researchers obtain feedback from applications to help them develop their skills in grant writing.

5. Submission Deadline
All applications should be submitted to ISSFPE@cardiff.ac.uk by **16:00, Thursday 29 October 2020**. Applications submitted after this time will **not** be accepted. All applications need to be subjected to the normal review and costings procedures within the submitting department.

### 6. Background

**Collaborative research definition**

Academics and members of the public work together on research projects, to create knowledge collaboratively. This could be co-production (where you engage people throughout the process, from setting the research questions to sharing the results) or collaborative engagement, where you involve people in certain parts of the research programme e.g. citizen science. This definition comes from the [National Co-Ordinating Centre for Public Engagement](https://www.nationalcoordinatingcentre.co.uk).

**About NERC showcases**

Successful applications will be required to create an output that can be shown, run, or engaged with, alongside other activities in the NERC Wales Showcase 2021. This can be presented at the [Techniquest event](https://www.techniquest.co.uk) or run in association at another location relevant to the public/community groups. Projects may also wish to create an output for the Eisteddfod or Urdd Eisteddfod 2021.

**Strategic drivers**

These projects will support the [UKRI Public Engagement Vision](https://www.ukri.org/public-engagement), and the [NERC Public Engagement with Research and Innovation Strategy](https://www.nerc.ac.uk) specifically:

- ‘Creating opportunities for people to discuss, create and participate in research and innovation is an important way to achieve this: it makes research and innovation more relevant, impactful and trusted.’
- ‘Engage under-represented communities and places with research and innovation’
- ‘Actively involve a wide range of people in their work’
- ‘Inspire public audiences with environmental science’
- ‘Build the capacity of our researchers to engage’
- ‘Promote engaged research’

NERC has a mission to engage the public with environmental science, as stated in the [NERC Delivery Plan](https://www.nerc.ac.uk) (‘Engage with the public, businesses, NGOs, policymakers and parliamentarians to draw-in expertise and share knowledge’), and referred to in the [Higher Education & Research Act (PDF)](https://www.gov.uk). Public engagement brings benefits to research, ensuring relevance to society and a wider perspective on social and ethical implications.