



**Natural
Environment
Research Council**

Strategic Capital Call 2020 Announcement of Opportunity (AO)

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Key information

Total amount (indicative)	Up to £10M
Minimum amount per application	£500K
Maximum amount per application	£1.5M (applicants requesting more than £1M must seek approval from NERC before submission)
Type of funding	Grant
UKRI funder(s) * <i>Lead council listed first</i>	UKRI - NERC
Co-funder(s) <i>External agencies</i>	N/A
Add link to start the application	Je-S application. Please select: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal Type - 'Standard Proposal' • Scheme – 'NC&C' • Call – 'Capital Call 2020'

Overview

We aim to invest in UK capital infrastructure that will deliver significant enhancements to research capacity in the environmental sciences.

If you are based at an eligible research organisation, you can (1) procure equipment or (2) develop built infrastructure that creates a new research capability.

Opportunity summary

We aim to support world-class environmental science, generate exciting scientific discovery and build on effective and efficient capability to sustain high quality research.

Applicants from [eligible Research Organisations](#) may request capital funding between £500K and £1.5M; applicants requesting more than £1M must obtain approval from NERC before submission. The funding duration will be 2020/21 - 2022/23.

Applications must fit [NERC's definition for capital](#) and support [NERC's environmental science remit](#).

Timeline

Event	Date	Time
Opening date *	25 August 2020	16:00
Closing date *	20 October 2020	16:00
Panel meeting	24 - 25 November 2020	
Decision date	January 2021	
Latest start date for projects	1 February 2021	
Latest end of awards	31 March 2023; max. duration 25 months	

Who can apply

- Standard individual eligibility applies and is in Section C of the [NERC research grant and fellowships handbook](#). Research Organisation eligibility rules are in Section C of the handbook. Applications are welcome from approved UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Research Council Institutes (RCIs), Independent Research Organisations (IROs), and NERC Research Centres. Full details of [approved RCIs and IROs](#) can be found on the UKRI website. NERC-funded Centres are eligible to apply.
- NERC values equality, diversity and inclusion across all its funding programmes, and actively encourages proposals from diverse groups of researchers.
- Investigators (PI or Co-I) may be involved in no more than two proposals submitted to this call and may only apply as the PI on one proposal. NERC will only consider the first two proposals submitted from any one investigator and will reject any additional proposals received without consideration.
- Research organisations may submit up to two Je-S proposals as lead organisation with a total combined value not exceeding £2M. In such instances, only one proposal may be for built infrastructure.
- Resubmissions of previously unsuccessful applications to NERC for capital funding are allowed, however the new proposal must meet all requirements stated in this opportunity. Please contact the NERC Capital team before submitting a resubmission.
- Some spend must be committed this financial year (2020/21) and as such successful proposals must start the grant before 1 February 2021 and have submitted the start confirmation by 8 February 2021.
- PI's requesting more than £1M must get approval from the NERC Capital team prior to submission. Requests must be sent to capitalrequirements@nerc.ukri.org. Proposals more than £1M without prior NERC approval will be office rejected.

What we're looking for

Summary

NERC has allocated a total of up to £10M in this strategic capital call to spend across 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. NERC reserves the right to work with successful applicants to determine the spend profile.

The primary objective of NERC's Capital Call 2020 is to provide strategic investment in UK capital infrastructure and deliver a step change in research capability. Proposed assets will likely create or offer a novel addition or improvement to an existing capability and will fulfil strategic research needs beyond those aligned to individual research projects. Specifically, this funding opportunity will support (1) the procurement of equipment or (2) the development of built infrastructure that creates a new research capability. Please note that routine building repairs are not allowed as part of this call but significant upgrades to built infrastructure which will lead to a step change in capability will be considered.

Numerous capital assets have previously been funded by NERC through [strategic environmental science capital investments](#). These competitive awards have been used to improve the environmental research landscape in different ways, from increasing capacity and enabling more efficient sample analysis, to improving precision in measurements, and enabling the development and/ or implementation of novel monitoring techniques.

Proposal requirements

Proposals are invited for capital assets in the form of: (1) equipment or (2) built infrastructure which:

- Fit the below definition for capital;
- Support NERC's environmental science remit;
- Demonstrate relevance to the research and innovation community, and the importance to NERC research specifically.
- Will create or build upon a new capability rather than maintain or duplicate an existing capability unless evidence is provided as to why this is appropriate;
- Will make the strongest possible contribution to the national agenda;
- Enable significant and world class environmental research to be undertaken that would otherwise not have been possible;
- Have the potential to stimulate innovation and economic impact;
- Provide maximum positive impact to the environmental research and innovation landscape over both short and long timescales;
- Demonstrate a commitment to embed sustainability within the project in line with [NERC's commitment to sustainable research](#);

Please note that the full specification is available in 'how we will assess your application.'

NERC considers capital to be the creation or purchase of an asset that has a useful life exceeding one year and that costs more than £10k. The definition of Capital can be found [here](#).

Capital Call 2020 application specifics

- Capital requests can include justified labour costs required for creating the asset where evidence is provided that these costs cannot be met elsewhere;

- Installation costs associated with the creation of the asset are eligible where costs are fully justified. Resource costs are not allowed;
- Principle Investigators are encouraged to discuss their proposal with their own organisation and local site management teams and, where appropriate, colleagues from other research organisations where there is the possibility of similar submissions from multiple research organisations.
- Proposals that request contributions to an already planned asset, or that will be topped up by an institute to deliver the requested asset, will be considered where they meet the requirements of the call. These proposals will require sign off from the institute's finance director (or equivalent) to demonstrate that the overall project is affordable and that future operating costs can be met;
- For all proposals, three equipment/built infrastructure quotations must be provided. For further detail, please refer to the sections: 'how to apply' > 'Je-S proforma' > 'equipment'.

Specifics for equipment applications

- Individual components which form a suite of equipment are allowable. Only one asset may be formed. Please see the definition of Capital [here](#) for further information.
- Applicants must consider the full lifecycle costs beyond this grant and which must be acquired elsewhere, including: (1) future operation and staffing costs, (2) whether there is enough demand, (3) strong governance and incentives to ensure efficient and effective use of the asset in the long-term;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) should be appropriately considered in the design and planned use of the asset;
- The proposal must adequately consider environmental impact; this includes demonstrable evidence that the potential of environmental harm from both procurement and ongoing operation has been considered. Considerations should include for example, energy use, conservation and management, asset lifecycle (e.g. end to end use, end of life opportunities, decommissioning). Evidence of actions taken to minimise potential harm and maximise benefit (e.g. actions taken to reduce carbon emissions) should also be clearly demonstrated.
- Proposals should avoid duplication of equipment by determining whether the asset being requested is available for equipment sharing. Where the asset requested is a duplicate, a strong case must be made as to why the pre-existing asset is insufficient to meet required capability and/or user demand and why the asset outlined in the proposal should be funded. Applicants should refer to (1) the details of capital assets funded under previous [strategic environmental science capital investments](#) (under funding awards), (2) the [national equipment database](#), (3) the [UKRI Infraportal](#), and (4) other available equipment sharing databases;
- Equipment must be made available to multiple users via equipment sharing and assets must be listed on the above-mentioned databases; multidisciplinary research on NERC funded capital equipment is welcomed.

Specifics for built infrastructure application

- Examples of built infrastructure proposals that could be submitted to this call include:
 - Significant upgrade/creation of a building that houses knowledge-based resources, (e.g. archives or collections), to ensure the long-term security of NERC funded environmental research and to avoid duplication of resources or science;
 - Significant upgrade to an existing research laboratory to enable novel NERC funded science to be undertaken at greater capacity.

- The proposal must adequately consider health and safety; this includes demonstrable evidence that the built infrastructure will adhere to local policies on emergency, security and building management;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) should be appropriately considered in the design and planned use of the built infrastructure (e.g. ensuring accessibility);
- The proposal must adequately consider environmental impact; this includes providing evidence that the design of built infrastructure has considered the potential of environmental harm from construction, where relevant, and ongoing operation. Considerations should include for example, power, waste heat, insulation, water conservation and management, and the extent to which development has considered zero carbon outputs. Evidence of actions taken to minimise potential harm and maximise benefit (e.g. actions taken to reduce carbon emissions) should also be clearly demonstrated.

The following will not be supported by this call:

- Proposals which do not demonstrate clear alignment to [NERC science remit](#);
- Proposals which will not significantly enhance environmental research and innovation capability;
- Requests for routine replacement and/or repair of assets, such as building repairs, maintenance and scheduled replacement of standard equipment, or costs related to renting or leasing of assets;
- Proposals for single-user or single-project equipment/built infrastructure;
- Requests for the purchase of equipment that constitute normal elements of a well-founded laboratory (e.g. centrifuges, fridges, incubators) unless as part of a larger built infrastructure proposal. Consumables will not be permitted under any application.
- Proposals for development of new technologies which are unlikely to generate a productive asset;
- Proposals for capital equipment that do not provide quotes for the requested equipment;
- Proposals for built infrastructure that do not provide quotes/indicative quotes for the requested infrastructure;
- Proposals that have also been submitted to other award schemes during the same time frame (including all UKRI grant schemes). Please note that proposals that have been previously rejected by other award schemes are allowed but NERC must be contacted prior to submission;
- Proposals requesting investment in Digital- or e-infrastructures, such as data and computing systems (please see the [Digital Environments](#) and [National Capability](#) funding streams for further information on funding such infrastructure);
- Requests for resource, including staffing costs related to operation and maintenance of the asset (i.e. after the creation of the asset), and to user-training; proposals should sufficiently detail how these resourcing costs will be met over the asset's lifetime;
- Associated studentships;
- Proposals which have not adequately considered sustainability.

Applicants cannot request the use of NERC Scientific support & Facilities (S&F) under this call. Applications that will provide capital assets for NERC S&F are welcome, however these must be discussed with the facility lead and the appropriate Centre contact. Proposals supporting

NERC's S&F must be coordinated and should not represent multiple requests for the same capital asset unless evidence for sufficient demand can be provided and prior consent given by NERC. If the application is not coming from the PI of the facility, but from, for example, a node of the facility or external to the facility, then a letter of support is required from the overall S&F lead and the relevant Centre contact must be informed of the proposal. This will ensure that any applications from within facilities are coordinated. Please see 'How to apply' if your application requires a Letter of Support from the NERC S&F.

Capital Call 2020 funding information

Applications seeking award values of more than £1M must contact the NERC Capital team via capitalrequirements@nerc.ukri.org in advance of submission and provide assurance on spend within the timeframes that they have specified. The maximum value award is £1.5M. Applications requesting more than £1M but which do not have prior consent will be office rejected.

Research organisations may submit up to two Je-S proposals with a total combined value not exceeding £2M. In such instances, only one proposal may be for built infrastructure.

Co-Investigators (Co-I) from the same or different institutes are allowed. All requested funds will be awarded to the listed institute of the Principle Investigator (PI) – no funds will be distributed to Co-I institutes. Co-I's are not included in the limit of two proposals per institution, nor do they contribute to an institution's overall application limit of £2M.

Investigators may be involved in no more than two proposals submitted to this call and may only apply as the PI on one proposal. NERC will only consider the first two proposals submitted from any one investigator and will reject any additional proposals received without consideration.

Successful proposals will be awarded at 100% of the cost of the proposed capital asset. Where a research organisation is providing additional funding for the proposal, this will not be accounted in the total grant value. In such instances, the proposal must clearly state how much funding has been acquired from elsewhere and how much funding is being requested from NERC and the resultant total cost of this. These proposals will require sign off from the institute's finance director (or equivalent) to demonstrate that the overall project is affordable and that future operating costs can be met.

Some spend must be committed this financial year (2020/21) and as such successful proposals must start the grant before 1 February 2021 and have submitted the Start Confirmation by 8 February 2021. Grants must conclude by 31 March 2023.

How to apply

Summary

Closing date for submission: Tuesday 20 October 2020, 16:00 UK Time

Full proposals must be submitted using the Research Councils' Je-S system.

It will not be possible to submit to the call after the closing date/time. Applicants should leave enough time for their proposal to pass through their organisation's Je-S submission route before this date. Any proposal that is incomplete, or does not meet NERC's eligibility criteria or follow

NERC's submission rules (see [NERC Grants Handbook](#)), will be office rejected and will not be considered for funding.

All attachments submitted through the Je-S system, with the exception of (1) letters of support, (2) project partner letters of support and (3) equipment/built infrastructure quotes, must be completed in single-spaced typescript of minimum font size 11 point (Arial or other sans serif typeface), with margins of at least 2cm. Please note that Arial narrow, Calibri and Times New Roman are not allowable font types and any proposal which has used any of these font types within their submission will be rejected. References and footnotes should also be at least 11-point font and should be in the same font type as the rest of the document. Headers and footers should not be used for references or information relating to the scientific case.

Please note that on submission ALL non-PDF documents are converted to PDF, the use of non-standard fonts may result in errors or font conversion, which could affect the overall length of the document. Additionally, where non-standard fonts are present, and even if the converted PDF document may look unaffected in the Je-S System, when it is imported into the Research Councils Grants System some information may be removed. We therefore recommend that where a document contains any non-standard fonts (scientific notation, diagrams etc.), the document should be converted to PDF prior to attaching it to the proposal.

This is a non-standard call for proposals, as such applicants must adhere to the guidance provided in this document, including the strict character/line limits.

Guidance to complete the Je-S proforma

For each proposal submitted, all relevant sections of the Je-S proforma should be completed and character restrictions adhered to. For particular sections, some requirements may differ from the standard Je-S application requirements and these are therefore detailed below. Please note: the panel are not obligated to check websites or hyperlinks provided in proposals.

- **Project title** (up to 150 characters)
- **Investigators**
 - Include applicant names, research organisation and department. Please note when completing the mandatory field '*How many hours a week will the investigator work on the project?*' state '0' (zero hours). No investigator costs can be claimed for this non-standard call.
- **Objectives** (up to 2000 characters):
 - Bullet point the main objectives of the proposed asset in order of priority.
 - Please state clearly here if equipment is being purchased for a NERC S&F. Please see section 'Research Council Facilities' for further information.
- **Summary** (up to 3000 characters):
 - Provide a plain English summary using language that could be publicised to a general non-academic, non-scientific audience which describes the proposed need for the asset and its primary functions. Please note: this section will be made available on the Gateway to Research database, therefore applicants should ensure confidential information is not included in this section.
- **Academic beneficiaries** (up to 4000 characters):
 - Describe and evidence actual and potential community demand and beneficiaries of the asset (this does not have to be solely academic; please include business, industrial,

- innovation and other links where appropriate). This should include the likely number of beneficiaries and named institutes and research groups that will use the asset, and in which research areas they specialise in. Discussions with industry should be evidenced through a letter of support.
- Where the proposal is for equipment: provide details of any associated training (supported by the host research organisation or other sources) that, if appropriate, will be provided for researchers using the asset.
 - Where the proposal is for built infrastructure: if appropriate, provide details of how the asset will support training (supported by the host research organisation or other sources).
 - **Resource summary:**
 - This section will self-populate with the total cost figure added to the “Equipment” section of the Je-S form. There must be no costs outside of “Equipment.”
 - **Equipment:**
 - Please provide details in compliance with standard Je-S guidance.
 - Please note that equipment here also includes built infrastructure elements.
 - Costs can include justified labour costs required for building the asset and/or installation costs associated with the creation of the asset. Evidence is required that details why these costs cannot be met elsewhere, for example by the host research organisation or a project partner. These labour and/or installation costs should be included in the total equipment cost figure requested and also detailed in the case for support document under: ‘breakdown of asset components’.
 - All costs must be under the equipment header; there must be no costs associated with resource (if resource is requested for procurement purposes, please categorise this with equipment). Applications requesting resource will be office rejected.
 - For all items of equipment requested, three quotations must be provided. Where you believe that there are less than three potential suppliers for an item, you should upload documents as equipment quotes that provide a brief explanation as to why fewer than three quotations were obtained.
 - For all built infrastructure proposals, three quotations must be provided. Where you believe that there are less than three potential suppliers for the built infrastructure, you should upload documents that provide an explanation as to why fewer than three quotations were obtained. Where accurate quotations are not able to be obtained, indicative quotes will be considered. In this instance, the applicant must demonstrate that efforts have been made to obtain full quotations, including for example, supporting evidence of conversations with suppliers or estates attached as a letter of support. Indicative quotations will require approval from the Institute’s Estates Director and Finance Director or equivalents; these should be submitted as an attachment to the proposal as a letter of support. If an indicative quotation is used, successful PIs will need to obtain a final quotation within 2 months of award acceptance. If the final cost of the grant differs significantly from the initial quote, NERC will endeavour to fund the final cost of the grant but reserves the right to amend the total grant value, taking into account the overall funding available for this call.
 - This non-standard call does not require a separate equipment business case to be submitted as part of the Je-S application process. Therefore, if prompted to include a business case, please upload a blank document.
 - **Research Council Facilities:**
 - Applicants cannot request the use of NERC S&F under this call.

- If equipment is being purchased for a NERC S&F this must be stated in the Objectives section of the Je-S form. Where the application is not from the PI of the facility, but from, for example, a node of the facility or external to the facility, a Letter of Support must be included from the NERC S&F and the relevant Centre contact must be informed of the proposal. The Letter of Support must be signed and dated within 6 months of the proposal submission.
- **Project partners:**
 - Please provide details in compliance with standard Je-S guidance. For each named project partner, Project Partner Letters of Support (dated within 6 months of the proposal submission) should be added, confirming clearly in bold at the beginning of the letter whether this is a cash or in-kind commitment from the partner.
- **Classification of the proposal:**
 - Please provide details in compliance with standard Je-S guidance. Applications for built infrastructure should consider what it will be used for.
- **Other support, related proposals and collaborative centres:**
 - Please leave this section blank.

Guidance to complete the Case for Support proforma

For each proposal submitted, all relevant sections of the 'Case for Support' proforma should be completed – please see the 'supporting documents' section below to download the proforma. Guidance to complete the form is included below. Please save the completed proforma as a PDF entitled "CfS - [title of the equipment/built infrastructure]". Upload the file to Je-S as the 'Case for Support' attachment.

Please note that the character limits/line lengths, font, font size (Arial, size 11) and formatting must be strictly adhered to; proposals which exceed any stated limits or adjust formatting will be office rejected. The Case for Support must not exceed 6 pages in length.

1. Asset description and location (max. 5 lines total)

- For equipment: provide the title, manufacturer and model where relevant.
- For built infrastructure: provide a high-level description of the infrastructure (e.g. DNA lab transformation) and location.
- Both: Provide the location where the asset will be located at a department and institute level.
- Please note, a full breakdown of the asset is requested in question 9.

2. Science background and need (max. 5 lines for each question)

- a) What are the top two science questions that this proposed asset will address or enable?
- b) How will the asset enable these questions to be addressed? OR How will the asset improve research capability and scientific output?
- c) If the proposed asset already exists elsewhere, please outline what/where the other asset/s is/are and what this asset provides that the other/s does/do not.
- d) How does the asset fit to the delivery of NERC research and the requirements of this call?
- e) How does the asset support NERC research and innovation specifically?
- f) To your knowledge, is any funding held, or being sought, for research that the asset relates to (e.g. peer-reviewed research, publications, plans to obtain funding, relevant national/international activities, well-aligned assets/proposals)? Please provide details if so.

3. Importance and timeliness (max. 5 lines for each question except 3a which is max. 8 lines)

- a) How will the asset create or support a step change in world class environmental science?
- b) How does the asset complement existing assets in the host institute?
- c) How does the asset provide a unique capability or improve existing capabilities? Please use quantitative answers (e.g. reduces analytical time by hours to seconds per analysis, rather than faster).
- d) Why is it essential this proposal is funded now?
- e) What is the impact if this asset is not funded (e.g. samples can be outsourced to different laboratories)?

4. User demand and usage (max. 5 lines for each question)

- a) What is the community demand for the proposed asset?
- b) How will this asset meet this demand?
- c) Provide a total estimate of the percentage usage of the asset (100% being used as much as possible). Please then break this down into use across the host institute (e.g. user profile – student, postdoc, industry), and where this is less than 100%, other, external users.
- d) What long- and short-term plans are in place to enable maximum usage?
- e) Where relevant, please demonstrate that asset sharing has been adequately considered to ensure long-term improvements to the regional or national environmental research landscape and identified stakeholders.
- f) Provide a plan that shows how the asset will be made available to use by others. Where charges will be incurred for external use, please provide an estimated cost of use. If charges will be levied for internal users, please also specify this and the associated costs.

5. Sustainability (please refer to max. lines for each section below)

- a) What steps and considerations have been taken to ensure that the asset is as sustainable as possible (environmentally, economically and socially)? (max. 8 lines)
- b) How is the proposed asset complementary to NERC/host institute carbon reduction targets? Note: NERC Centres should detail how the project is complementary to the NERC commitment to have net zero emissions for all operations by 2040. Non-NERC funded applicants should note how the project complements the carbon reduction targets of the host organisation, where applicable, and state what this is (max. 5 lines).
- c) What is the expected lifetime of the asset? (max. 1 line)
- d) Will the proposed asset need to be decommissioned at any point, and if so, how will this be done sustainably? (max. 5 lines)
- e) How will you ensure maximum value for the lifetime of the asset? (max. 5 lines)
- f) How will the long-term operational and maintenance costs, including staffing, beyond the procurement stage and remit of this call will be funded? Clearly outline any additional financial support provided by the host institute or elsewhere (max. 5 lines).
- g) Will the proposed asset be integrated into an existing NERC service, facility, HEI equipment pool, or similar? If so, how? (max. 5 lines)

6. Impact (max. 5 lines for each question)

- a) How will the asset generate wider impact (e.g. make data produced from equipment open source; create employment or training opportunities; stimulate economy)?
- b) How will the natural environment be positively impacted by the asset?
- c) Does the asset have high potential to deliver large scale impacts, including social, environmental and/or economic benefits? If so, what are these and how will the asset support the delivery of these?

d) Does the asset have potential to stimulate innovation? If so, what sorts of innovation and how?

7. Costs (please refer to max. lines for each section below)

- a) State the overall cost in pounds sterling (£); this cost should align with at least one of the quotes attached to the application. If the host organisation is providing additional funding for the proposal, clearly state how much the host organisation is providing and the total funding requested from NERC. (max. 1 line)
- b) Justified labour costs that are required for procuring and installing the asset may be included within the funds requested. In this instance, please ensure these costs are clear and include a justification that details why they are required and cannot be met elsewhere (max. 3 lines).

8. Spend profile (see table. Max 5 lines for 8a)

- Please provide an estimated spend profile taking account of different variables (e.g. procurement timescales). Please include VAT in these estimates where applicable.
 - Please note that NERC reserves the right to work with successful applicants in the funding frame to determine the spend profile.
- a) Will a change in the spending profile significantly impact the asset as outlined in the proposal? If so, how?

9. Breakdown of asset components (character limits identified in table)

- If the proposal comprises a suite of components that will work collaboratively to function as one larger asset, clearly state the estimated cost of each component and provide justification of how the components work within the asset applied for, and if applicable, the number of components required to function. Rows may be added to the table to allow for listing of all components.

How we will assess your application

Eligible proposals that meet the criteria for this call will be assessed by an expert panel. The expert panel will consider whether there is sufficient evidence that the asset will meet the following key criteria:

1. Creates or supports a step change in world class environmental science capability; creates a new, or builds upon existing, capability; and makes the strongest possible contribution to the national agenda;
2. Demonstrates long-term support for NERC's environmental science, enabling significant and world class environmental research to be undertaken that would otherwise not have been;
3. Demonstrates a strategic and timely response to an evidenced community demand. The asset is important to multiple beneficiaries and it is clear how it fits in with others in existence at both the host institute and elsewhere. The proposal demonstrates clear, sensible plans with respect to how the asset will be utilised and/or shared amongst both internal and external users, including consideration of asset sharing to ensure long-term, sustainable improvements to the environmental research landscape;
4. Demonstrates full consideration of [sustainability](#), including for the lifecycle of the asset. The proposal demonstrates consideration for preventing environmental harm and enhancing environmental benefit in line with the NERC Responsibility Statement. Responses should

be proportional to the size and nature of the project and include evidence of actions taken to minimise carbon emissions;

5. The proposal will likely demonstrate the asset's capability to generate wide impacts including for example, social, environmental and/or economic benefits. The asset may include links with industry and, in such cases, there will be evidence that the asset could stimulate innovation.

If the asset is already available for equipment sharing in the UK, the panel will determine whether a credible justification has been made for an additional asset.

When making the final funding decisions, NERC will use the recommendations of the panel, along with the overall call requirements and the available budget.

Feedback will be provided for eligible proposals meeting the call criteria that were discussed by the expert panel.

Decisions and offer letters are anticipated to be made in January 2021.

Contact

For all enquiries, please contact Rebecca Smith via capitalrequirements@nerc.ukri.org.

Additional information

Implementation and delivery

Funded equipment must be purchased and installed, or built infrastructure completed, before the conclusion of the grant and, in line with normal grant processes, a Final Expenditure Statement (FES) will be required by three months after the grant end date. Applicants will be expected to adhere to any specific grant conditions and follow NERC guidelines for the procurement and management of capital assets as set out in the [NERC research grant and fellowships handbook](#).

Data Management

It is not expected that data will be produced as an output of this call, therefore an outline data management plan is not required.

Reporting requirements

Successful applicants will be required to report research outcomes on ResearchFish in line with standard [UKRI Terms and Conditions](#). This is required annually and continues for up to five years post grant end.

Grant holders must also fulfil NERC's reporting requirements up to twenty-four months after the grant end date. Reports will be requested in six monthly intervals and will ask for:

- confirmation of the successful procurement and installation of the funded asset;
- a list of other grants, projects, HEI's or businesses that have used, or plan to use, the asset;

- details on the asset usage, including the approximate breakdown by hours for each user group and, where applicable, information on equipment sharing;
- other identified benefits of the investment.

Please note that NERC reserve the right to conduct asset verification which could include site visits to view the asset. NERC also reserve the right to request further relevant details with respect to the assets funded at any point.

To encourage equipment sharing, grant holders of equipment must list their asset on the [national equipment database](#) and the [UKRI InfraPortal](#). The URL link to the equipment will be requested in the grant reporting. This is not required for grants for built infrastructure.

To encourage best practice, NERC welcomes impact case studies detailing how capital assets have been successfully utilised and shared or used by people outside of the host institute, as well as those that demonstrate what actions have been taken to promote sustainable research practices.

NERC must be informed as soon as possible if, during the lifetime of the asset, the need for the asset diminishes substantially or it is not being used for the purpose for which it was funded. NERC reserves the right to withdraw funding or determine the disposal of equipment and to claim the proceeds of any sale if these requirements are not being met.

To ensure continual improvements and development of best practice, NERC welcome feedback on the application process for this call. If you would like to provide feedback, please email: capitalrequirements@nerc.ukri.org.

Supporting documents

- Case for Support proforma

Related content links

- Further information on NERC Capital funding can be found [here](#).
- The pre-announcement for this call can be found [here](#). Please note that some of the call specifics have changed during development, including the range that funding applicants may request, and the total funds available for the call.