



Announcement of Opportunity

NERC Data Management Online Training Portal

Application Closing Date: 16:00 GMT, September 12th 2017

Date Document Updated	Section Updated	Details
16/08/2017	29.	Je-S call name updated to NPIF Advanced Training SEP17

1. Summary

2. NERC invites proposals to develop an online training portal offering training in data management relevant to its remit and aligned with the objectives of the [Industrial Strategy](#).
3. This online portal will support training for UK-based environmental science PhD students with a focus on the need and 'how to' of engaging with end-users as well as enhancing students' ability to present data and write in a way that is appropriate to end-user needs; translating environmental science into addressing business/policy challenges. It is expected that the training portal will also support training in the key principles of data management to underpin the training identified above.
4. It is anticipated that one award will be supported through this call and the successful applicant will be awarded two years' funding to develop, launch and promote the portal and all spend must be completed by 31st March 2019. It is expected the training portal will remain accessible for a minimum of five years from its launch in January 2018.
5. There is a total budget of £212.5K available for this scheme - £170K for F/Y 2017/18 and £42.5K for F/Y 2018/19.
6. This opportunity is open to organisations eligible for NERC managed-mode research grant funding.

Background

7. NERC received a funding allocation via the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) to support funding for current PhD students to develop key skills aligned with the Industrial Strategy through the provision of additional training opportunities.
8. At its December 2016 meeting, the NERC Training Advisory Board (TAB) identified that data skills remain an area of training priority for environmental science PhD students. Skills of relevance to data management align with several objectives and themes within the Industrial Strategy, and are also of relevance to the needs of many users of the outcomes of NERC research.

9. NERC intends to meet this training need by enhancing the data skills of our PhD students as they relate to the Industry Strategy. Reflecting the importance of supporting training in this area and the value of these skills across the environmental sciences, this training will be delivered through an online training portal accessible to UK environmental science PhD students. Making this training easily accessible will ensure that a broad range of students will participate and that the impact of this investment is felt beyond the lifetime of the funded period.

Remit of the Call

10. The call is to support training in data management with a particular focus on the needs of end-users of NERC research. Training will be delivered through an online training portal which will remain accessible for a minimum period of five years from its launch. The training portal must be developed with this legacy in mind.
11. The data management training must fall within the [NERC science remit](#) but may also include training at the interface between these areas and other disciplines, where many major challenges exist.
12. The training award holder will be required to develop and support training covering:
 - A. The broad principles of data skills and management, and its importance for modern researchers;
 - B. Common data skills and management techniques, guidance, and issues;
 - C. Specific data skills and management techniques, guidance, and issues relevant to particular areas of the NERC remit;
 - D. Engaging with users of NERC research and communicating to them the key and relevant outcomes from these data.
13. This training will focus on the need and 'how to' of engaging with end-users as well as enhancing students' ability to present data and write in a way that is appropriate to user needs; translating environmental science into addressing business/policy challenges. It is expected that the training portal will also support training in the key principles of data management to underpin the training identified above.
14. Applicants are required to detail within their proposal the training they will develop against each of the four areas identified above supported by appropriate justification concerning the specific training outcomes and delivery format.
15. Applications proposing to work with the [NERC Data Centres](#) in the development and delivery of this training will be particularly welcomed. However, it is expected that all training must be strategically aligned with and complementary to the current provision of the NERC Data Centres. NERC Data Centres are also invited to act as lead on applications to this training but, in this event, Data Centre-led applications must be submitted through an [eligible Research Organisation](#).
16. To raise the profile and impact of the training portal, the training provider will be required to undertake a series of short training events (c. 1/2 a day each) across NERC's Doctoral Programmes (both Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) and Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs)) during the funded period. These short training events are to introduce DTP and CDT students to this data skills training and the benefits of good data

management practice in addition to raising awareness of the training available through the online portal. These training events should be offered regionally across DTP/CDTs to allow integration between students across different NERC programmes and based at different Research Organisations.

17. Information concerning the training NERC supports through its doctoral programmes is available through the individual websites of the NERC [Doctoral Training Programmes \(DTP\)](#) and [Centres for Doctoral Training \(CDT\)](#) linked to through the attached webpages. It is expected that applicants will not duplicate but instead complement existing training supported through other NERC awards.
18. This award is cash limited and additional funding will not be made available to supplement it under any circumstance
19. The award holder will be responsible for all aspects of the development and maintenance of the training portal. NERC IT support will not be made available at any time for this opportunity. The training portal can be hosted on a university/research organisation website but it must be clear that this portal is a NERC resource and it must be easily accessible by individuals from outside of that organisation.
20. **NERC expects that all applicants engage as appropriate with relevant non-academic stakeholders when developing and delivering training.**

Funding

21. There is a total budget of £215.5K available for this scheme and NERC intends to support one award. All spend must occur by March 31st 2019.
22. Reflecting the profile of funding available through the NPIF supporting this opportunity, funding will be awarded as indicated in **Table 1** below

Table 1: Funding profile for NERC Data Management Online Training Portal

Financial Year	Available Budget
2017/18	£170,000
2018/19	£42,500
TOTAL	£215,500

23. Funding will be provided at 100% Full Economic Cost (FEC).
24. Funding to cover costs such as web hosting, graphic development, staff travel, time and subsistence costs, venue hire, materials and consumables can be included. Indirect and estate costs should not be included.
25. A breakdown of these costs must be included within the application so that the panel may assess the costs associated with the proposed training. Applications that fail to provide this information will not be considered by the assessment panel and rejected for this call.

26. The assessment panel may recommend to NERC that individual costs or the overall cost of a proposal be reduced prior to making an offer of award.

Eligibility

27. This opportunity is open to [organisations eligible for NERC research grant funding](#), i.e. applicants based in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), NERC Research & Collaborative Centres, and Independent Research Organisation (IROs) approved by NERC. This is a managed mode scheme.
28. Applicants may also include formal Project Partners who will have an integral role in the development and delivery of the proposed training portal.

Application Process

29. NPIF Data Management Training proposals must be submitted using the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S). Applicants should select Document Type – 'Studentship Proposal' and then select the Scheme – Doctoral Training (4913). The Call Name (Je-S) is 'NPIF Advanced Training SEP17'.
30. All applicants should include start and end dates of 1st September and 31st March 2019 respectively within their proposals.
31. To use the Je-S system, the RO must be registered as a Je-S user. Full details are available on the [Je-S website](#). Further information can also be obtained by contacting the Je-S Helpdesk by email at JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk, or by telephone on 01793 444164.
32. Applicants should leave enough time for their proposal to pass through their organisation's Je-S submission route before 16:00 GMT on September 12th 2017. Any application that is received after the closing date, is incomplete, or does not meet this competition's eligibility criteria, will be returned to the applicant and will not be considered.
33. Proposals should be submitted from the administrative lead partner. The administrative lead partner will receive the training grant funding and will be the main point of contact for NERC. Where multiple departments of the same organisation or multiple organisations are involved in the proposal, they will need to be added to the application pro forma as a project partner.

Proposals

34. A NERC Data Management Online Training Portal Case for Support pro forma is available to download from the NERC website and this document must be completed and attached to your Je-S application as a "Case for Support" document. Please do not attach any additional documents as they will not be considered when reviewing your application.
35. Case for support documents should be no longer than 8 A4 pages in length not including the Applicant Details and Justification of Resources sections.

36. The Case for Support attachment submitted through the Je- S system, must be completed in single-spaced typescript of minimum font size 11 point (Arial or other sans serif typeface of equivalent size), with margins of at least 2cm. References should also be at least 11 point font. Please note that Arial narrow and Calibri are not allowable font types and any proposal which has used either of these font types within their submission will be rejected. References and footnotes should also be at least 11 point font and should also be in Arial. Headers and footers should not be used for references or information relating to the scientific case. Embedded diagrams or pictures or numerical formulae may contain text that is smaller than 11 point but applicants should ensure that the font is legible. Text in tables and figure labels not within embedded diagrams should be at least 11 point. If applicants are not able to use Arial font and are unsure whether the font type they plan to use will meet NERC guidelines then they should contact the [NERC Research Careers team](#) before submitting their proposal for confirmation of whether or not the font type they plan to use is acceptable.
37. Applicants should note that the assessment panel will not consider reference to external sources, e.g. websites, if these are included within the text.
38. Each NERC Data Management Online Training Portal application case for support should include information under the headings detailed below:
- **Training Excellence** – information concerning the structure, content, and training outcomes of the proposed training portal and accompanying training events, as well as the expertise and experience of the applicants in delivering training of this nature.
 - **Training Justification** – justification of the decisions made under *Training Excellence*.
39. No additional attachments, including letters of support, will be accepted.

Assessment Process

40. Bids will be assessed by a group of independent experts against two criteria:
- **Training Excellence (75%)**
 - **Training Justification (25%)**
41. Training Justification scores will be used to rank proposals in the event of equal weighted scores.
42. Additional information about these assessment criteria can be found in **Annex A** to this document.
43. The scoring guide to be used by the assessment panel can be found in **Annex B** to this document.
44. All eligible applications will be reviewed by the assessment panel and there will not be an external review stage for this call.

Programme Timetable

Date	Activity
15 August 2017	Call opens on Je-S
12 September 2017	Call closes on Je-S
28 September 2017	Application assessment meeting
October 2017	Award announced
October – 31 December 2017	Training portal development
01 January 2018	Training portal launched
01 January 2018	Promotional activities inc. doctoral programme training events begin
By 31 March 2019	Promotional activities inc. doctoral programme training events end
31 December 2023	Earliest date to close training portal

Reporting Requirements

45. All successful applicants will be required to capture information relevant to the impact of the training portal (e.g. modules completed, number of registered users, etc.). A summary of this information will be provided to the [NERC Training Advisory Board](#) for comment.

Contact

For all enquiries please contact:

NERC Research Careers

Email: researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk

Annex A: NPIF Data Management Training Assessment Criteria and Factors & Evidence that might be discussed

Please note this does not present a complete list of all factors that may be discussed but those that will form the basis of discussions during assessment.

Assessment Criteria	Key aspects of an excellent proposal	Factors and evidence that might be discussed
<p>Training Excellence (75%) /10</p>	<p>Identified, realistic training outcomes</p> <p>Well-justified, excellent quality, training content delivered in an appropriate manner to provide confidence that the training outcomes will be met</p> <p>Relevant expertise across all staff involved in the preparation and delivery of the training</p> <p>Appropriate scale to meet training delivery outcomes and impact national training need</p> <p>Well-considered plan for maintaining the portal for its lifetime and ensuring an impactful legacy for this investment.</p> <p>End-users of NERC Research fully integrated into the development and delivery of the training course</p>	<p>Logical and deliverable training plan</p> <p>Academic, training and online-delivery experience of applicants to develop and deliver all proposed training</p> <p>Feedback and learning outcomes of previous or similar training in which the applicants were involved</p> <p>Availability of relevant infrastructure to deliver the training e.g. IT support, equipment, facilities, support, training staff.</p> <p>Accessibility and scale of proposed training including how the proposed training will be advertised.</p>
<p>Training Justification (25%) /10</p>	<p>Proposed training fully within areas of identifiable training need and demand relevant to the theme of data management and the NERC science remit</p> <p>Training outcomes are clearly aligned with the Industrial Strategy and focus on the needs of users of NERC research</p> <p>Clearly justified resources necessary to deliver the proposed training</p>	<p>Training outcomes relevant to NERC remit and mapped onto objectives of call and Industrial Strategy</p> <p>Evidence from organisations, end-users, etc. indicating a need for individuals equipped with the skills identified as training outcomes.</p> <p>Information on all staff time and additional resources relevant to the development and delivery of the training at a level where resources for delivering each training component can be discussed (i.e. not just "Staff costs - £xk")</p>

Annex B: NPIF Data Management Training Scoring Descriptions

Scoring Descriptors and examples				
Criterion	Excellent 8, 9, 10	Good 6, 7	Average 3, 4, 5	Poor 0, 1, 2
<p>Training Excellence (75%)</p>	<p>Proposed training is of outstanding/excellent quality</p> <p>Realistic, high impact learning outcomes with a clear and achievable delivery plan</p> <p>Training staff and course leads with a proven, leading track record in delivering excellent training in the proposed areas</p> <p>First-rate supportive infrastructure and equipment to maximize training impact</p>	<p>Proposed training is of very good/good quality</p> <p>Achievable, moderate impact learning outcomes with a reasonable delivery plan</p> <p>Training staff and course leads with a track record in delivering training in the proposed areas</p> <p>Appropriate supportive infrastructure and equipment to ensure training impact</p>	<p>Proposed training contains some is mostly of average quality</p> <p>Learning outcomes either difficult to achieve or low impact</p> <p>Training staff and course leads have some experience of delivering training in the proposed areas</p> <p>Some supportive infrastructure and equipment in place but either incomplete or unsuitable for achieving all training outcomes</p>	<p>Proposed training is of poor quality</p> <p>Unachievable or no identified learning outcomes with few/no details on how they will be delivered</p> <p>Training staff and course leads present little or no evidence of delivering training in the proposed areas</p> <p>Inappropriate or no supportive infrastructure and equipment in place</p> <p>Little or no justification for course scale</p>
<p>Training Justification (25%)</p>	<p>Strongly evidenced argument demonstrating the national need and demand for the proposed training and how this training will address this.</p> <p>Training outcomes clearly relate to the Industrial Strategy and are highly relevant to the needs of users of NERC research</p> <p>Justified and clear resource request clearly demonstrating how all aspects of the training will be supported</p>	<p>Some evidence presented demonstrating the national need and demand for the proposed training and how this training will address this</p> <p>Training outcomes relate to the Industrial Strategy and are relevant to the needs of users of NERC research</p> <p>Good justification for resources to support training but lacking in clarity or not covering all areas</p>	<p>Little evidence presented demonstrating both the need and demand for the proposed training and how this training will address this</p> <p>Training outcomes barely relate to the Industrial Strategy and of some relevance to the needs of users of NERC research</p> <p>Some justification for resources but not across all areas and lacking in clarity</p>	<p>No evidence presented demonstrating the national need and demand for the proposed training.</p> <p>Training outcomes of no relevance to the Industrial Strategy and do not consider the needs of users of NERC research</p> <p>Little or no evidence presented to justify requested resources or completely lacking in clarity</p>

