



## Announcement of Opportunity

### 2017 NERC Industrial Strategy Training Course Competition

**Closing Date: 16:00 GMT, September 12<sup>th</sup> 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 for courses to deliver training in topics relevant to its remit and aligned with the objectives of the Industrial Strategy.
3. Funded training courses must be completed by 31st March 2018.
4. This opportunity is open to organisations eligible for NERC managed-mode research grant funding.
5. Courses must prioritise NERC-funded PhD students for available places. Places left unfilled by NERC PhD students can be awarded at the discretion of the award holder according to applicant training need.

#### Background

6. NERC received a funding allocation via the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) to support current PhD students to develop key skills aligned with the Industrial Strategy through the provision of additional training opportunities.
7. NERC already supports a broad range of excellent research and transferable skills training through its doctoral programmes and Advanced Training portfolio. This call has been developed to complement and enhance NERC's current training portfolio by supporting training to allow NERC students to acquire and apply new skills relevant to fulfilling the objectives of the Industrial Strategy.
8. Training supported through this programme will form part of NERC's Focused training portfolio.

#### Remit of the Call

9. All training courses must fall within the [NERC science remit](#) but may also include training at the interface between these areas and other disciplines, where many major research challenges exist.
10. This call is to support training courses aligned with the [Industrial Strategy](#) and all proposals will be required to demonstrate within their application how their proposed training will equip students with skills and experience relevant to fulfilling the objectives of the Industrial Strategy; to underpin growth, productivity and rebalancing of the national economy, within the context of excellence in the environmental sciences. Applications that do not demonstrate clear alignment with the Industrial Strategy will not be considered for funding.
11. **NERC expects that all applicants engage as appropriate with relevant non-academic stakeholders, particularly users of NERC research, when developing and delivering training. This engagement will be considered during the assessment process.**
12. Funding will not be provided through this call to support currently funded training, even if aligned with the objectives of the Industrial Strategy. It is expected that applicants will not duplicate but instead complement existing training supported through other NERC awards.
13. Award holders can, but will not be required to, link to other areas of the NERC training portfolio e.g. Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) or Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) to deliver their proposed training.
14. Information concerning the training NERC supports through its doctoral programmes is available through the individual websites of the NERC [Doctoral Training Partnerships \(DTP\)](#) and [Centres for Doctoral Training \(CDT\)](#) linked to through the attached webpages. Information concerning training supported through NERC's [Advanced Training](#) portfolio, such as [Advanced Training Short Courses](#), is also available.
15. Training courses may take a variety of forms (including but not exclusively):
  - i. Short Courses
  - ii. Workshops
  - iii. Field Courses
  - iv. E-Learning/Webinars/Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
  - v. Summer Schools; etc.
16. Training courses may form part of accredited Continuing Professional Development (CPD), Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma.
17. All courses must offer places as priority to NERC-funded PhD students. Where there is competition for course places between priority candidates or between non-priority candidates, the award holder should offer places to applicants according to the applicant training need and impact that receiving training will have on them.

18. These awards are cash limited and additional funding will not be made available to supplement any awards.

## **Funding**

19. Applicants can apply for a maximum of £100k to develop and deliver an Industrial Strategy Training Course. It is expected that most applicants will request £30k-£50k.
20. Funding should be calculated on a per student (place on the training course) basis and proposals may request up to £10k in justified direct costs per student, although it is expected that most training courses will require between £1-£3k per student and that proposals will normally be looking for funding for between 10-30 students. The per-student cost will be funded at 100% Full Economic Cost (FEC).
21. The cost per student requested should include, where appropriate, support for travel and subsistence costs for students to attend the training. Funding to cover staff travel, time and subsistence costs, venue hire, materials and consumables can be included. Indirect and estate costs should not be included.
22. A breakdown of these costs must be included within the application so that the panel may assess the costs associated with the proposed training at a per student level and identify the costs requested under each heading, e.g. student travel and subsistence, venue hire, materials, etc. Applications that fail to provide this information will not be considered by the assessment panel and rejected for this call.
23. 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.
24. All training courses supported through this opportunity must be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

## **Eligibility**

25. 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.
26. Applicants may also include formal Project Partners who will have an integral role in the proposed training course.
27. NERC funded DTPs and CDTs are eligible to apply to this competition for funding to support training courses aligned with, but in addition to, their existing DTP and CDT student training programmes. Applications may not request funding to support activities already funded through the DTP/CDT awards. DTP/CDT applications must demonstrate that the proposed training is not duplicative of their existing training within their application.

28. Training courses delivered by NERC DTPs and CDTs must be open and advertised to attendees beyond the DTP/CDT and places on these courses must be offered according to the programme priority criteria.

## **Application Process**

29. Industrial Strategy Training Course 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. Regardless of the actual training dates, applicants should provide a Start Date of October 1st 2017 and an End Date of March 31st 2018. All training must occur within this period and be completed by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018.
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](mailto: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 12<sup>th</sup> 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 funding for the Industrial Strategy Training Course and will be the main point of contact for NERC. Where multiple departments of the same organisation or multiple organisations are involved in the Industrial Strategy Training Course, they will need to be added to the application pro forma as a project partner.

## **Proposals**

34. An Industrial Strategy Training Course 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 4 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 Industrial Strategy Training Course Application form should include information under the headings detailed below:

- **Training Excellence**
- **Training Justification**

39. No additional attachments, including letters of support, will be accepted.

### **Assessment Process**

40. Bids will be assessed by a group of independent experts under two assessment headings:

- **Training Excellence (50%)**
- **Training Justification (50%)**

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. Please note, applications requesting funding at the upper end of allowable amounts will not be discriminated against in favour of proposals requesting lower funding amounts both for total amounts and for per student costs. All applications will be assessed solely against the criteria detailed above.

45. All eligible applications will be reviewed by the assessment panel and there will not be an external review stage for this call.

46. The assessment panel will consider existing NERC training when agreeing their funding recommendation for NERC executive with the intention of minimizing duplication in the training supported by NERC. Applicants must therefore demonstrate within their

proposal that there is a clear need for their proposed training.

47. The Industrial Strategy Training Course assessment group will consider the spread of proposal training areas for those within the funding frame when ranking proposals within the scoring range in which the funding cut-off occurs. This is to ensure that training is supported across a broad range of priority areas. A proposal receiving a lower overall score will not be funded in preference to one that received a higher final score.

### **Industrial Strategy Training Course Programme Timetable**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
15 August 2017	Call opens on Je-S
12 September 2017	Call closes on Je-S
28 September 2017	Application assessment meeting
October 2017	Awards announced
October 2017	Industrial Strategy Training Course training grants begin
31 March 2018	All Industrial Strategy Training Course awards completed
30 April 2018	All reporting complete

### **Reporting Requirements**

48. All successful applicants will be required to report on their training course. This information is requested so that engagement by students with the training supported through this opportunity can be measured. This information will inform future opportunities aligned with the Industrial Strategy

49. Award holders will be expected to report on the:

- number of applications received
- number of places awarded to: 1) NERC PhD Students & 2) Other individuals (with basic information concerning their current role e.g. PDRA, etc.)
- a summary of feedback from attendees on the training course
- current institution of attendees
- high level summary of current academic area of applicants defined within [NERC Research Areas](#)

50. NERC will distribute appropriate pro formas well ahead of the deadlines for the collection of these data.

### **Contact**

For all enquiries please contact:

**NERC Research Careers team**

Email: [researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:researchcareers@nerc.ac.uk)

## Annex A: Industrial Strategy Training Course 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 short course	Factors and evidence that might be discussed
<p>Training Excellence (50%) /10</p>	<p>Identified, realistic training outcomes</p> <p>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>End-users of NERC Research fully integrated into the development and delivery of the training course</p>	<p>Identified training outcomes and how they map to priority areas of identifiable training need relevant to NERC remit</p> <p>Logical and deliverable training plan</p> <p>Academic and training experience of applicants to develop and deliver all proposed training</p> <p>Feedback and learning outcomes of previous or similar training courses in which the applicants were involved</p> <p>Availability of relevant infrastructure to deliver the training e.g. 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 (50%) /10</p>	<p>Proposed training within areas of identifiable training need and within NERC remit</p> <p>Training outcomes are clearly aligned with the Industrial Strategy and focus on the needs of users of NERC research</p> <p>Identified and well-justified national need and demand for training of this nature and its outcomes</p> <p>Clearly justified resources necessary to deliver the proposed training</p>	<p>Identified gaps in the national provision of training of this nature such as a dearth of comparable courses delivering equivalent training outcomes</p> <p>Skills learning outcomes identified and mapped onto Industrial Strategy</p> <p>Report outcomes, other than NERC Most Wanted, identifying the need for training in the specific skills and expertise identified as outcomes</p> <p>Data from organisations, end-users, etc. indicating a need for individuals equipped with these skills.</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: Industrial Strategy Training Course Scoring Descriptions

Scoring Descriptors and examples				
Criterion	Excellent 8, 9, 10	Good 6, 7	Average 3, 4, 5	Poor 0, 1, 2
Training Excellence (50%)	<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>Extremely well justified course scale including location, attendee numbers, course structure and duration</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>Justified course scale including location, attendee numbers, course structure and duration</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>Some justification for course scale but not convincing</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>Proposed training is so unrealistic or contains issues so severe it cannot be considered for funding.</p>
Training Justification (50%)	<p>Strongly evidenced argument demonstrating the national need and demand for the proposed training and how this training will address this.</p> <p>Justified and clear resource request clearly demonstrating how all aspects of the training will be supported</p> <p>Training outcomes clearly relate to the Industrial Strategy and are highly relevant to the needs of users of NERC research</p>	<p>Some evidence presented demonstrating the national need and demand for the proposed training and how this training will address this</p> <p>Good justification for resources to support training but lacking in clarity or not covering all areas</p> <p>Training outcomes relate to the Industrial Strategy and are relevant to the needs of users of NERC research</p>	<p>Little evidence presented demonstrating both the need and demand for the proposed training and how this training will address this</p> <p>Some justification for resources but not across all areas and lacking in clarity</p> <p>Training outcomes barely relate to the Industrial Strategy and of some relevance to the needs of users of NERC research</p>	<p>No evidence presented demonstrating the national need and demand for the proposed training.</p> <p>Little or no evidence presented to justify requested resources or completely lacking in clarity</p> <p>Training outcomes of no relevance to the Industrial Strategy and do not consider the needs of users of NERC research</p>

