Knowledge Exchange Fellowships (Open)

Announcement of Opportunity

Proposals deadline: 4pm on 17th April 2018
Interview dates: 12/13/14th June 2018

1. Summary

NERC wishes to award a number of Open Knowledge Exchange (KE) Fellowships. The NERC Open Knowledge Exchange (KE) Fellowships are intended to enable the sharing and flow of knowledge and expertise between the NERC funded researchers and their user communities with the aim of generating impact from NERC funded research. KE Fellows work between 20% and 80% of their time on a work plan of their own choosing to generate impact from NERC-funded research in their host institution. The KE Fellowships will cover 100% of the Fellow's salary on a pro-rata basis including superannuation, NI and specific allowances, plus up to £40,000 for travel and other associated costs. They cover direct costs only and do not include overheads. There is no budget limit for salary costs and applications are particularly welcomed from individuals who are working at a senior level within a department or school. The KE Fellow must be employed by their host institution for the duration of their fellowship.

2. Background

NERC science can make an important contribution to economic growth and quality of life. For the UK to remain competitive in a global economy, we need to ensure that scientific advances are translated swiftly into a form that is useful to stakeholders including
Businesses, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and government. These stakeholders use NERC research for many purposes, including:

- providing the scientific evidence necessary to inform public policy and business strategy as our environment alters
- protecting people and minimising costs through better forecasting of environmental hazards
- creating wealth by providing business with the starting point for new or improved products, services and solutions.

### 3. Scope

The NERC Open Knowledge Exchange (KE) Fellowships are intended to enable the sharing and flow of knowledge and expertise between the NERC funded researchers and their user communities. Applicants can propose their own programme of work on any area within the NERC remit that has a basis in NERC funded research. Applications for KE Fellowships should focus on accelerating and amplifying economic impact and improvements in quality of life from NERC-funded research, by working with business, NGOs or government bodies.

Approaches could include:

- strengthening existing partnerships
- developing new relationships that lead to collaborative projects
- researching new market opportunities
- providing briefings and reports suitable for policymakers.

### 4. Programme requirements

The KE Fellows can be a focus for a school/department KE activity arising from NERC funded research. It is understood that in some cases a mix of funding will lead to an opportunity to generate impact but it is essential that NERC funding has played a key role. The KE Fellow should have the committed support of the Head of Department or School and an enthusiasm for knowledge exchange should be apparent.

#### 4.1 Programme funding

#### 4.1.2 Activities supported

The purpose of KE Fellows is to boost the impact of NERC funded research. This can be
by strengthening existing partnerships or developing new ones. This may involve working with business and identifying market sectors that fellows recognise as being of relevance, or it could require collaboration with public sector bodies and/or NGOs.

It is recognised that at the application stage the full impact may not be known. By providing a track record of their own work plus that of the host school/department(s) KE activity they can set their proposal in context.

KE Fellows may be required to provide examples of case studies of knowledge exchange arising from NERC funded research in their host organisation for NERC purposes. Commercial in confidence considerations will be respected.

Part of the role of KE Fellows could be to assist in exploiting KE plans that have been awarded funding alongside NERC research grants and to coordinate these to ensure optimal impact. However to successfully obtain funding the proposals should demonstrate that the KE Fellow is having a broader role than this.

4.1.3 Examples of Activities that may be supported:

Below are some examples of the type of activities that may be supported, but other approaches are welcome.

- **Developing relationships with business.** These could be developed with the aim of interpreting their environmental science needs, demonstrating the potential offered by the latest research or developing an exchange of resources – these can be non-cash based.

- **Data development.** Substantial amounts of data are generated from research and often published in ways that are not easily available or meaningful to potential users. The KE Fellows could be employed to develop data into meaningful outputs for business.

- **Covening meetings and workshops** of stakeholders and/or expert advisors e.g. NGOs, government and private sector to exchange skills and techniques and to provide input to design or delivery of the work.

- **KE translators/facilitators.** Employing a facilitator to move between the research base and the business community to act as a focal point for a range of activities to improve knowledge exchange can be useful. In some cases it may be essential for this translator to help businesses define the questions that they want to ask academics.
• **Technologies Commercialisation activities.** These will still be undertaken by the host institution. KE Fellows may assist in identifying and championing potential commercial products.

4.1.4 **Ineligible activities**

The KE Fellows should **not** be used to support:

- Activity that is solely for the purpose of knowledge exchange between different sections of the academic research base
- Public understanding of science
- Consultancy
- Training

4.2 **Implementation and delivery**

KE Fellows work between 20% and 80% of their time on a work plan of their own choosing to generate impact from NERC-funded research in their host institution. An open KE fellowship can last for 1 to 3 years and will cover 100% of the Fellow's salary on a pro-rata basis including superannuation, NI and specific allowances, plus up to £40,000 for travel and other associated costs. They cover direct costs only and do not include overheads. There is no budget limit for salary costs.

4.3 **Programme management**

NERC KE Fellows are required to operate as part of a network of KE Fellows that encompasses both Open and Directed KE Fellows. Successful applicants will be expected to link with other NERC Knowledge Exchange Fellows to share best practice and to participate in the NERC Knowledge Exchange Network, which meets once or twice a year (travel for these can be costed into the proposal). NERC will also run training days for KE Fellows and other KE practitioners who are funded by NERC. Current Knowledge Exchange Fellows are listed on the KE Fellows webpage. Applicants are welcome to contact Lynne Porter (see contact details below) and other KE Fellows before making their application to discuss their proposed programme of work.

4.4 **Reporting requirements**

As with all NERC grant holders, there will be a requirement to report through the RCUK reporting system (ResearchFish); this is required annually and continues for up to five years post grant end. In addition to this, KE fellows are also required to complete an annual report form direct to the Knowledge Exchange team.
4 Application process

5.1 How to apply

Closing Date: 4pm, 17th April 2018

Full proposal must be submitted using the Research Councils’ Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S). Applicants should select:
Council- ‘NERC’
Proposal Type - ‘Standard’
Scheme – ‘Innovation People’
Call – ‘KE Fellows APR18’.

Applicants must ensure that their proposal is received by NERC by 4pm on the closing date (at which point the Je-S portal closes). 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.

All attachments, with the exception of letters of support and services/facilities/equipment quotes, submitted through the Je-S system must be completed in single-spaced typescript of Arial size 11 point 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 either 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. Applicants referring to websites should note that referees may choose not to use them.

Applicants should ensure that their proposal conforms to all eligibility and submission rules, otherwise their proposal may be rejected without peer review. More details on NERC’s submission rules can be found in the NERC research grant and fellowships handbook and in the submission rules on the NERC website.

Please note that on submission to council 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
5.2 Notes on completing the J-es form

- **Project Details**
  Project Title - State that you are applying for an Open KE Fellowship in the title.

- **Fellow Details**
  Open KE Fellowships are awarded 100% of costs with no provision for overheads. An exception is for NERC Research Centres where a new costing system has been introduced of 100% direct cash. Apply as directed and if successful these awards will be amended to fit the new costing requirement.

- **Beneficiaries**
  Identify the key users who will benefit from your programme of work and what impacts this may generate. This may be economic benefits or those that increase the quality of life, or generate changes in policy. You should consider how your project will enhance the impact of the NERC funded science related to your community or programme. Think about how you will connect with the most suitable people in the NERC community to generate impact.

- **Resources**
  You may not know what costs the KE Fellowship will incur because to a large extent it will depend upon the requirements of the user community or programme. Requests for additional funding for specific activities such as training courses or additional workshops/events may be considered once the award is underway.

  **Open fellowships**: Tick the Exceptions box. Costs will be funded at 100% Direct Costs. These KE Fellowships will cover the KE Fellow's salary including superannuation, NI and specific allowances, plus up to £40k for travel and other associated work plan costs. The award does not cover overheads.

- **Attachments**
  The only attachments we require are:
  - **Case for support** - outline your ideas of how you will undertake this role (4 sides A4 max)
  - **CV** – please attach your CV (2 sides A4 max)
  - **Justification of Resources** – (2 sides A4 max) explain why you need funds for activities making reference to your project objectives.
  - **Head of Department Statement** - (2 sides A4 max) It is helpful for the selection
panel if the HoD’s statement can explain where the KE Fellow would fit into broader university department or school KE objectives and existing partnerships. It does not necessarily need to be the HoD, someone who can give a strategic viewpoint will also be suitable. This supporting person may need to attend the interview with the applicant or be available at the end of a phone.

- **Work plan** – Outline the timeline for carrying out the fellowship (2 sides A4 max).
- **Letters of Support** – Upload letters of support. These need to be from organisations who are offering support in cash or support in kind and who will be engaged in the programme of work. It is not the number of letters but the quality of the letters that the panel are looking for.

### 5.3 Eligibility

Proposals must be submitted from a NERC research centre or a Higher Education Institution in receipt of NERC-funded research. Fellowship applicants can be from a user or academic background and be at any stage of their career, as long as the academic host institution will be their employer for the duration of the fellowship.

### 5 Assessment Process

Proposals will be assessed on potential impact and the suitability of the Knowledge Exchange Fellow. The RCUK definition of economic and societal impact is:

“The demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy. Economic and societal impacts embrace all the extremely diverse ways in which research-related knowledge and skills benefit individuals, organisations and nations by:

- fostering global economic performance, and specifically the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom,
- increasing the effectiveness of public services and policy,
- enhancing quality of life, health and creative output.”

An action or activity has an **economic impact** when it affects the welfare of consumers, the profits of firms and/or the revenue of government. Economic impacts range from those that are readily quantifiable, in terms of greater wealth, cheaper prices and more revenue, to those less easily quantifiable, such as effects on the environment, public health and quality of life.

Applications will go through a two-stage process:

- A paper sift by a panel
- Interview by the panel of the prospective KE Fellow and a department/university representative.
Applicants will be given brief feedback from the Panel summarising the reasons why the proposal was successful/unsuccessful in being invited to interview. Further feedback will be provided to all those invited to interview.

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

6  Timetable

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Announcement published:</td>
<td>January 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for submission of full proposals:</td>
<td>17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; April 2018 at 4pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant informed of paper sift</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview panel meets:</td>
<td>12/13/14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; June 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latest start date for projects:</td>
<td>January 2019</td>
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7  Contact

For all enquiries, please contact Katie Hart (katrt@nerc.ac.uk) or Lynne Porter (Lyn@nerc.ac.uk)