

Oil and Gas – Innovation Programme



Guidance for applying to the Oil and Gas Decommissioning research translation call following the Brokerage Event

Contents

What is research translation?	1
Summary	2
Eligibility	2
Project Partners	3
Assessment	3
Application procedure	4
Timeline.....	7
Intellectual Property	7
Confidentiality.....	8
Reporting	8
NERC Contacts.....	9
Frequently Asked Questions	10

What is research translation?

For the purpose of this opportunity, research translation is defined as the integration or adaptation of existing research outputs to enable the development of technologies and solutions for the benefit of practitioners and decision-makers outside of academia. This includes emerging or adapting research outputs or the bringing together of dispersed knowledge and developing it into a form that is appropriate for use by the practitioner/decision-maker. Research translation is predicated on access to expertise and the exchange of knowledge – often leading to the fusion of knowledge between academia and the practitioner/decision-maker. Therefore, effective knowledge exchange is the cornerstone of research translation, resulting in new products, services, tools, technologies, demonstrator projects, evidence-based systematic reviews, and other outcomes that create tangible economic or societal benefits.

Summary

- Research translation proposals must fit the remit of oil and gas decommissioning and its environmental management and within the remit of [NERC](#).
- All proposals must involve an end-user project partner (or partners) (i.e. private, public or third sector organisations or institutions, private industry, public bodies (such as government departments, local government, regulatory authorities, etc.), non-government organisations or charities).
- Proposals must clearly describe how the project (if funded) will create sustainable, tangible economic or societal benefits.
- Projects will be funded for 6 - 12 months.
- Total funding of £850k is available from NERC for this call to support an expected portfolio of 5 projects at 80% of the Full Economic Costing (FEC). The maximum available funding per project is £170k (FEC).

Call opens: 6 July 2016

Call closes: 15 September 2016 (16:00)

Successful projects start: December 2016

Eligibility

Standard RCUK eligibility rules for NERC apply to this call. [Full Guidance on eligibility](#) is available on the NERC website. For further information on approved UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), approved Research Institutes (RIs) and approved Independent Research Organisations (IROs) visit the RCUK website: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/>

Proposals must fit within [NERC remit](#). The call has a primary focus on the UK. Proposals for work with overseas partners, or where the impact will be overseas, will be accepted, but priority will be given to projects with a UK focus.

The scheme is designed to be flexible to encourage applicants to be innovative in their approach to accelerating the uptake of research by users through translational and knowledge exchange activities. The call will fund activities that aim to achieve outcomes that deliver impact. **Eligible final outcomes** from the project could include, for example:

- Innovative products, for example tools and models such as software and decision making tools, that are adopted by non-academic users;
- Direct embedment of new knowledge in user organisations to deliver improvements, e.g. in process, service provision etc.

The following are not eligible as final outcomes in their own right and are **only eligible as pathways to, and methods of, creating impact:**

- Secondments and placements;
- Creation and running of networks;
- Development of websites, events and publications;
- Running of dissemination events, such as workshops;

- Production of dissemination literature;
- Drafting reports.

The following are **ineligible**:

- Projects focused solely on delivering training;
- Academics acting as consultants for commercial third parties (However, a small proportion of the funding may be used to buy in consultancy services from third *parties* in order to progress the project);
- Activity between only different sections of the academic research base or between the research base and the general public;
- Commercialisation activities (Projects focused upon generating outputs with a likely commercial return to the academic applicants' organisation should be directed to the NERC [Follow-on Fund](#));
- Collaborative Research / Research (These kinds of proposals should be made to the [Standard - responsive mode- Grants Scheme](#)).

Project Partners

All proposals must involve an end-user project partner(s) (i.e. a private, public or third sector organisations or institutions, private industry, public bodies (such as government departments, local government, regulatory authorities, etc.), non-government organisations or charities). Research Council Institutes and HEIs are **not** eligible as *end-users*.

Applicants must provide the names of these end-user organisations (and their representatives) in the 'Project Partner' section of the Je-S form.

Assessment

Proposals will be assessed by an Assessment Panel made up of academic and industry representatives.

It is expected that any proposal awarded funding through this Oil and Gas Decommissioning Call will demonstrate clear relevance to the UK oil and gas sector whilst utilising excellent science and robust and appropriate scientific methods. In order to be considered fundable proposals must:

- Be based on a programme of work within NERC remit.
- Address one or more of the challenges related to decommissioning and its environmental management identified by end-users as presented in the scope of the Announcement of Opportunity for the Brokerage Event. NERC will look to fund a balanced portfolio of translational projects across these challenges.
- Be focussed on research translation (not new research).
- Involve a relevant end-user project partner.

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Innovation and Impact Potential** – I.e. fit to scope of call; relevance to end-users; How the project will change “business as usual” within the project partner, or be transformative to UK oil and gas sector as a whole; strength engagement from project partner/s.

A high score against this criterion will indicate a project that is well aligned with the needs of the UK oil and gas sector, and which will lead to a step change in how the sector as a whole is able to address challenges related to decommissioning and its environmental management. The proposal should show strong evidence of project partners being deeply involved in the development of the proposals and of their commitment throughout the project. There is a clear route for the project outputs to be utilised by the project partner and the benefits to the partner are well defined, including success measures.

- **Mechanisms for delivery** – I.e. Appropriateness of science to answer project partners’ questions including the novelty of the science being applied or the approach proposed; Expertise and achievability; Value for money.

A high score against this criterion will indicate a project which is supported by excellent underpinning science of the highest international standards. The science being utilised may be being applied in a new context or the project may bring together novel combinations of academic data or expertise which has the potential to deliver exciting and transformative outcomes for the oil and gas sector. The project team has relevant skills; the project plan has clear milestones, outputs and outcomes and is achievable. The project represents good value for money.

Application procedure

Applicants are required to submit their proposal through Je-S. The Je-S system will be open for submissions from 6 July 2016. The deadline for the submission of proposals is **16:00 on 15 September 2016.**

Applying through the Je-S system

You must use the [Joint electronic Submission \(Je-S\)](#) system to prepare and submit your Innovation proposal. In order to apply, the organisation where the applicant is employed must be registered to use Je-S. Most UK research organisations are now registered. A list of Je-S registered organisations is available on the Je-S webpage.

If you do not have a Je-S account, you will need to create one. To do this, you will need to select the option "Create Account" from the main Je-S log-in screen.

Je-S Helpdesk

If you have forgotten your account log in details or are unsure whether you already have an account, please contact the Je-S helpdesk who will advise you. Email: JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk; Phone: +44 (0) 1793 44 4164

Guide to completing the Decommissioning Call proposal in Je-S

The submission route that your **Decommissioning Call** proposal will take depends upon how the Research Organisation has configured its submission process.

You will of course be in discussion with your Research Organisation about your application. As part of these discussions, you should ensure that it is content to submit the proposal on your behalf. Upon submitting the proposal to the Research Council, the Research Organisation submitter will be asked to confirm that it has verified your identity.

Step 1: Log in with your Je-S account, click on Documents and create a new Document

Step 2: Complete Add a Document

Select Council: NERC

Select Document Type: Standard Proposal

Select Scheme: Innovation

Select Call: 'Oil and Gas Innovation Programme R1'

Step 3: Complete the following sections:

- **Project Details**
- **Applicants**
- **Joint proposals** – Tick yes or no as appropriate. The lead application will generate a unique joint reference number which should be quoted on each component proposal.
- **Objectives** – List the main objectives, which will be explained in more detail in the case for support.
- **Summary** – A brief overview of the proposed work including its impact on project partners. More detailed information is requested in the case for support.
- **Beneficiaries** – A brief overview of the beneficiaries/end users. More detailed information is requested in the case for support.
- **Impact summary** – A brief overview of the impact expected. More detailed information is requested in the case for support.
- **Other Support** – Insert details of other support sought or received for work in a related area.
- **Related Proposals** – How the proposal relates to previous proposals to NERC, if applicable.
- **Research Council Facilities** – Complete as appropriate.
- **Resources** – This call will fund proposals at 80% FEC. Please refer to the [NERC Research Grants and Fellowships Handbook](#) on finance and costing.
- **Staff resources** – Complete as appropriate.
 - **Non-staff resources (T&S, Equipment, Other Directly Incurred Costs, Other Directly Allocated Costs)** – Add new item and complete boxes as requested.
 - **Estates and Indirect Costs** – Add new item and complete boxes as requested.
- **Project Partners** – All projects should have project partners from end-user organisations (i.e. business, policy or civil society). Please complete this section for each project partner. More information about the contribution of project partners is requested in the case for support.
- **Classification of proposal** – Complete Scientific Area and ENRI –by assigning % relevance to NERC scientific areas
- **Collaborative Centres** – Check the appropriate button if this proposal is submitted under

the auspices of NCAS or NCEO.

- **Proposal Classifications** – Add Research Area and assign the Percentage Relevancies, Add Qualifiers for Geographic Area and Project Engagement by Sector as applicable

Step 4: Add attachments

All proposals must contain:

- 1. Case for support**
- 2. Letters of support from project partners**
- 3. CVs for applicants**
- 4. Justification of resources**

Supporting documents should aim to stress the project's **impact**.

All attachments must comply with the NERC standard requirements as listed in [NERC Research Grants and Fellowships Handbook](#). All attachments, with the exception of letters of support and services/facilities/equipment quotes, must be completed in single-spaced typescript of **minimum font size 11 point (Arial or other sans serif typeface of equivalent size to Arial 11), with margins of at least 2cm**. Photo-reduced type must not be used. Applicants should avoid the use of colour graphs or pictures, which will not be reproduced in colour for referees. Any proposal in which the attachments do not comply with these specifications will be rejected.

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 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.

- 1. Case for support – The Case for support template provided with this guidance MUST be used**, applications will be rejected if not. It asks for more detailed information than can be submitted on the Je-S form. The case for support asks for more detailed information on the following areas:
 - Outcomes and impact on partner/s where we are looking for evidence that the project will be 'disruptive' for the end-user organisation, this should include a change from "business as usual". Examples include increase in market share or value of the company, financial or reputational gains, change of ways in which decisions are made or implemented, new employment opportunities, societal and environmental benefits, including new evidence in decision-making etc. Examples of anonymised statements that were judged to be good in previous calls are given in footnote ¹. Please try to include measurable and specific outcomes over a defined timescale.

¹ Example statements: (a) This collaboration will allow vulnerable communities to benefit from the latest scientific developments by creating an Early System Warning;(b) The project will change the way in which forecast is made and interpreted when making a decision about issuing a flood warning; (c) The project will allow the company to create a new market and to gain a first-mover advantage in the next 6-9 months; (d) The pilot will lead to a new decision-making tool being developed, tested and evaluated.

- Project description & objectives including activities, interim milestones, outputs and work plan.
- Contribution of partners - details of activities to be provided by partners. It is expected that proposals will have end-user partners and that the contribution/involvement of partners will have been discussed and agreed.
- Skills & experience to deliver the project, both scientific track record and experience of knowledge exchange and achievement of impact in related areas.

2. Letters of Support from project partners – The letters of support from the project partners must be written by an end-user organisation and include reasons why the project is important for the end-user’s business, how the organisation will be involved in the project, what they will contribute and how the results will be used. Name and contact details of a person providing a statement must be included. Guidance for project partners is included in Appendix 1.

3. CVs for applicants

4. Justification of resources – which should include a breakdown of costs outlined in the Je-S form.

Step 5: Check your document

Click on Document actions to check document validity and preview document. The red buttons on the left hand side of the page will turn green once the sections are completed and the submit button will become available.

Timeline

Date	Event
Decommissioning Brokerage Event (call opens)	5 July 2016
Call closes	15 September 2016 (16:00)
Assessment panel meeting	October 2016
Successful projects start	December 2016

Intellectual Property

NERC will make awards on the understanding that the project partner will commit the resources to the project as described in their Letter of Support. Where such commitment cannot be fulfilled, NERC expects that equivalent support and resources will be found.

Collaborative agreements can be put in place to enable all parties to better understand their roles on the grant and to clarify the IP rights (IPR) position. NERC does not need to see these but applicants are advised to put this in place where necessary to protect their best interests.

Confidentiality

Innovation applications are provided to NERC in confidence. If successful, NERC will not use the information contained in the application (or any further information provided later in support of the application) for any purpose except the purpose of reviewing the grant application and monitoring it. NERC may disclose the application to its employees and panel members and, possibly other funding bodies for the purpose of assisting it in deciding whether or not the application should be funded.

Details of funded proposals are made available on the website and possibly other public funded databases. The following information will routinely be made available:

- Name of host Research Organisation;
- Details of applicants (title, forenames, initials, surname, department);
- Project title;
- Technical and non-technical summaries of the research;
- Duration of the project; and
- Funding provided by NERC.

Applicants should ensure that where there is commercially confidential or sensitive information contained within the proposal, it is worded in such a way to protect this.

Reporting

Recipients of Innovation funding will be required at the end of the grant to report on the progress made against the project's objectives and to identify any outcomes or impacts. Please see the ['Innovation Project Highlights and Impact Template'](#) form for details of the reporting required in addition to standard grant reporting procedures.

All projects will be expected to attend and present the results and progress of projects funded under the Programme at Oil and Gas Innovation Programme dissemination events.

At the end of project all grant holders will be expected to work with NERC to produce a case study (based on the final report). The case study should clearly state the end-user's problem, how science has been applied to develop a 'solution' and the (quantified) impact of the project on the end-user organisation, i.e. how the project has had a 'disruptive' or transformative influence on the end-user.

NERC reserves the right to approach project partners and named end-users on funded grants to understand their benefits from the grant.

NERC Contacts

If you have any queries, please contact:

Lizzie Hinchcliffe

Innovation Programme Officer

Tel: 01793 411940

Email: elihin@nerc.ac.uk

Sarah Keynes

Knowledge & Innovation Manager: Natural Resources

Tel: 01793 411541

Email: saryne@nerc.ac.uk

Or email: innovation@nerc.ac.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

General

I did not attend the Brokerage Event; can I still apply to the projects call?

No, applications to the research translation call are restricted to Brokerage Event participants. Where specialist expertise is required, applicants can make the case to include additional project team members who did not attend the event. Project leads (Principal Investigators) should contact the NERC office with their justification for including additional project team members at least two weeks prior to submission.

I would like to work with an end-user that was not at the Brokerage Event; can they be a Project Partner on my proposal?

Yes, proposals may involve end-user project partners that were not at the Brokerage Event. Applicants are encouraged to co-develop proposals with end-users to ensure high relevance to the sector and support however as this will be a key part of project proposal evaluation and assessment.

Due to the small amount of funding available, is it possible to submit joint project proposals (i.e. two linked proposals, each requesting £170k, which form one larger project of £340k).

No, joint applications will not be accepted in this call. Each proposal will be assessed independently from one another.

Does my proposal have to answer the topics and questions posed by end-users at the Brokerage Event?

It is anticipated that projects funded under this call will be applicable to at least one of the themes identified and this will form a key part of project proposal evaluation and assessment. NERC is however open to considering proposals related to aspects of oil and gas decommissioning beyond these themes, provided that they are clearly within NERC remit and are translational in nature. Applicants are encouraged to co-develop proposals with end-users to ensure high relevance to the sector and support.

Eligibility

I work for a public sector organisation, am I eligible to bid for project funding?

Unfortunately, public sector organisations are not be eligible to bid for this funding. However, they can participate as a Project Partner or Sub-contractor in a proposal led by an eligible Research Organisation. Sub-contractors are required to demonstrate why their infrastructure and capabilities are best suited to conduct the research than any other eligible Research Organisation in UK. Please see section C of the [NERC Grants Handbook](#) for further information of eligibility. For further details about eligibility, please also see page 2 above.

Completing the Application

Do the word and page limits include references?

Yes, references are included in the word and page limits.