



## Environmental Risks to Infrastructure Innovation Programme



### NERC Environmental Risk to Infrastructure Innovation Programme

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) invites proposals for innovation projects as part of the [Environmental Risks to Infrastructure Innovation Programme](#) (ERIIP). More information about the [themes and hazards covered by ERIIP](#), are available including a list of ERIIP members. Please read the [announcement of opportunity and supporting documents](#) first.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Eligibility FAQ's

##### Are joint proposals acceptable?

Yes- it is up to the RO to decide if they want to put in a joint application or if they just want to submit one application and transfer money across to another RO if awarded.

##### Does it fund research?

No, just KE/translational activity. A small amount of work to complete a dataset where it was essential to the translational work would be acceptable.

**Proposals must be 'translation-focused'** – i.e. focused on using existing science research (knowledge, data, models or skills) and translating this into outputs that meet the needs of the end user(s) (as opposed to generating new research outcomes).

The following types of innovation projects will be considered for funding:

- Syntheses and mapping of existing research in a particular area to aid and transfer knowledge to the industry
- Bringing together data from disparate sources (e.g. related to different environmental hazards, or environmental data with data on the engineering or economic impacts sourced from academia or project partners)
- Translation of existing data, knowledge, expertise into tools, solutions and approaches to meet a specific industry need
- Decision-support tools incorporating NERC data or knowledge
- Direct embedment of new knowledge in user organisations to deliver improvements, e.g. in process, service provision etc.
- Scenarios of environmental risks and their impacts on infrastructure
- Model synthesis, merging and manipulation to answer a specific challenge, need or issue

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. This includes merging or adapting research outputs to either significantly reduce the technical uncertainty of a

particular solution or technology, or the bringing together of dispersed knowledge in an appropriate form, to overcome barriers to future business investment. Furthermore, research translation is predicated on access to expertise and the exchange of knowledge. Therefore, effective knowledge exchange is the cornerstone of research translation which itself leads to new products, services, tools, technologies, demonstrator projects, evidence-based systematic reviews, and other outcomes that create tangible economic or societal benefits.

**Can I apply if my project follows on from research outputs, but those outputs were generated by another institution/project/grant?**

This would be eligible as long as it is NERC remit research and within the scope of the ERIIP programme.

**Is it possible for the proposal to be built on a previously funded project by a co-investigator rather than the principal investigator?**

An application from a previous Co-I is perfectly acceptable.

**Can a postdoctoral researcher be a Principal Investigator (PI) on a NERC Innovation call?**

A postdoctoral researcher cannot be a PI on the innovation call, but can be a Research Co –Investigator.

**The proposal will develop the outputs from a grant that ended a while ago, is there a time restriction after which you will no longer fund the development of outputs from grants?**

There is no restriction regarding the end date of previously funded grants that the application builds on.

**Is this funding call only for UK based work?**

No, overseas work is eligible, but maybe of less interest to some of the ERIIP members.

**I missed the closing date for the Expression of Interest stage; can I apply to the Full proposal stage?**

No, only those proposals that have been successful at the **Expression of Interest stage** are invited to apply to the Full proposal stage.

## **Project Partner FAQ's**

**Do I need to have an ERIIP industry member as a project partner on my proposal?**

No, project partners do not have to be ERIIP members. However all projects must have a partner related to UK infrastructure, e.g. infrastructure owners, operators, regulators or policy-makers. (Project partners cannot be other research organisations.)

**Do project partners have to be committed at the EOI stage?**

No, but we would have expected applicants to have had at least initial conversations with prospective project partners.

### **I do not have a project partner, how can I find one?**

There are a number of ways through which NERC are helping academics find project partners:

1. A brokerage workshop on 8th March 2015 will provide an opportunity for academics to meet ERIIP members and other project partners related to UK infrastructure
2. A list of organisations that are looking for academic collaborators, along with the topic areas they are seeking academic expertise in, has been published on the NERC website alongside the AO.
3. Contact CIRIA, who are offering a project partnering support service to facilitate introductions between the academic community and industry. Contact CIRIA: Sirio D'Aleo [Sirio.DAleo@ciria.org](mailto:Sirio.DAleo@ciria.org) 020 7549 3300

### **Is it possible to sub-contract some of the work to partners so that they are paid?**

A small percentage of the funding can be used in this way if the expertise is not available within the research organisation and is not part of the partners' contributions in kind. It is strongly encouraged that the project partner contributes either 'in-kind', finances, resources, equipment etc.

### **What is meant by an 'end-user'?**

An 'end user' in terms of the Innovation project call, is going to be the organisation that you are working with who will use and benefit from the product/service you are applying for. In the ERIIP call, end users are the project partners. We would expect the end user to be involved in the process from the beginning in order to inform the end result is what they need. The end user can be from private industry, public bodies or NGO's.

## **Cost FAQ's**

### **Costs regarding travel and subsistence – are these just for travel to the project partner, or would they also cover conference travel.**

The travel and subsistence could cover conference costs- but NERC would not want that activity to make up the majority of the project, a small element would be ok.

### **Does the ERIIP call cover equipment costs?**

As the projects are aimed at the utilisation and development of existing data and knowledge, costs associated with equipment should be minimal and restricted to those needed for the delivery of the project. Agreement to fund these costs are made on a case-by-case basis.

### **What is the maximum amount of funding that can be applied for?**

The maximum amount of funding you can apply for is £200,000 at 80% FEC

## **Other FAQ's**

### **Do I have to attend the brokerage event to submit an Expression of Interest application?**

No.

**Can I submit more than one Expression of Interest application?**

Yes

**Does building stock/building/aeroplanes/NHS/healthcare fit into the scope of Infrastructure for this call?**

NERC defines infrastructure as:

Areas of transport infrastructure (roads, railways, airports, ports, canals, bridges and tunnels); utilities infrastructure (distribution networks, power generation including renewables, water); environmental management (flood management, green infrastructure, waste management and drainage) and communications (space weather, broadband, satellites). Also, integrators of environmental science such as engineering consultancies, large scale developers and the construction industry, as well as policymakers and regulators with responsibility for infrastructure.

**How many short term projects vs long term projects do you envisage funding?**

We do not have a specific split in mind, but it will be projects with strong end user engagement and potential for impact.

**Are those that are unsuccessful in this round allowed to reapply in subsequent rounds?**

Yes feedback will be provided to enable applicants to decide whether to further develop their proposal and resubmit.