

SPF Clean Air Steering Committee Chair – Role description

Summary of the Opportunity

The SPF Clean Air programme is looking to appoint a new Steering Committee Chair to support the Clean Air Programme drive forward innovative and transformational change in the UK's air quality research and innovation landscape. The programme supports multidisciplinary research and innovation to stimulate solutions for clean air through predictive understanding of future air quality challenges, a systems approach to analysis, new technologies and innovative policy and practice interventions to benefit vulnerable groups, improve public health and support clean growth.

The Chair role is vital in ensuring that the Programme Board receive clear and timely advice and plays a pivotal part in the governance of the Clean Air Programme. The Steering Committee has been in place for some time and this is opening is to replace the previous Chair that has now taken a new role.

We are seeking a Chair with a wide range of experience in air quality research and innovation and the broader Clean Air programme remit. We are particularly keen to hear from those with experience of embedding research outputs into policy and business, and maximising the impact of research more generally.

Self-nominations, via a short expression of interest form, are invited by 4pm on 14 December 2020.

Background to the Clean Air Programme

The Clean Air programme is a £42.5 million research and innovation investment supported through the UK Research and Innovation Strategic Priorities Fund. The aim is to bring together the UK's world-class research base and support high quality multi- and inter- disciplinary research and innovation to develop practical solutions for today's air quality issues and equip the UK to proactively tackle future air quality challenges, in order to protect health and support clean growth.

The programme is delivered through two waves; the first (£20.5 m) has supported multidisciplinary research and innovation on near-term outdoor air pollution issues and the funded projects will develop short-term policy relevant outputs, support commercialisation of near-market solutions for non-exhaust transport emissions and deliver a pilot systems framework for clean air analysis.

The second wave of investment (£22 m) will support new interdisciplinary research and innovation that will equip the UK to proactively tackle new and emerging air quality challenges related to changes in the types of air pollutants emitted and their importance across the indoor/outdoor interface, with regards to exposure patterns and impacts on those most at risk.

Funding for the Clean Air programme is provided through the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF), which has been set up to build upon the vision of a 'common research fund' set out in Sir Paul Nurse's independent review of the Research Councils. The fund will drive an increase in high-quality multi- and



interdisciplinary research and innovation, ensure that UKRI's investment links up effectively with Government departments' research priorities and opportunities, and ensure that the system is able to respond to strategic priorities and opportunities.

The Clean Air programme is jointly delivered by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the Met Office, with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), Innovate UK, Medical Research Council (MRC), National Physical Laboratory (NPL), Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), Department for Transport (DfT), Scottish Government and Welsh Government.

Further information about the SPF Clean Air Programme can be found at
<https://nerc.ukri.org/research/funded/programmes/clean-air/>

Chair of Steering Committee responsibilities

The Steering Committee provides strategic advice to the Programme Board to support the programme objectives. In particular, the Steering Committee should provide advice and recommendations to the Programme Board on:

- Alignment with cross-Departmental and Devolved Administration priorities.
- User engagement and programme impact.
- Opportunities for complementarity with other initiatives, both nationally and internationally.
- Effective ways of research co-ordination and coherence.
- Proposed scope and scientific content of calls and directly commissioned research and innovation.
- Appropriate ways to monitor and evaluate the progress of the programme towards its purpose and goal.

The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the Steering Committee and will:

- Ensure that the necessary business of the Committee is carried out efficiently, effectively, and appropriately.
- Act as the main point of contact between the Steering Committee and the Programme Board.
- Ensure that the Committee acts in accordance with the SPF Clean Air Programme Steering Committee Terms of Reference (<https://nerc.ukri.org/latest/news/nerc/chair-for-steering-committee/>) and should seek advice from the Secretary in any case of uncertainty.
- Ensure that the Committee exercises collective responsibility. The Chair will encourage all members to work together effectively, contributing their skills and expertise as appropriate, and will seek to build consensus among them.
- Ensure that the Committee conducts itself in accordance with accepted standards of behaviour in public life, embracing selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Required Commitment

The Steering Committee meets up to four times a year, usually in the second month of each quarter (February, May, August, November), or by exception as needed. Meeting dates and times will be agreed with the Chair before they are booked. Meetings are currently held virtually, and typically last a few hours. Once it is safe to do so, meetings may return to face-to-face (location to be agreed), therefore a full day may be required to allow for travel and meeting time.

In addition to time spent preparing for and chairing meetings, some additional time might be required to fulfil the role. This will be variable and depend on the programme activities, an example activity may be contributing to programme evaluation. This additional time will be agreed in advance with the Chair. The Chair of the Committee may be required to attend the Programme Board by invitation.

The position is advertised as voluntary; expenses will be paid under the terms of UKRI policy. In some situations, the Chair may be eligible to receive a meeting fee for each meeting that they attend. If you would be interested in this, please contact us to discuss eligibility and the fee amount. Receiving a fee or not will have no bearing on our decision

The Steering Committee Chair is expected to provide an impartial voice for the programme. Therefore, the Chair is ineligible to hold funding from the programme during their tenure as Chair.

Selection Criteria

We are seeking an individual with:

- A comprehensive understanding of, and leadership within, the UK clean air research and innovation landscape, with the ability to take a system view of the clean air research and innovation domain.
- Experience of translation and embedding research and innovation into policy, practice, and business, and maximising the impact of research.
- Experience of chairing or participating in multidisciplinary committees, boards or panels, with the ability to inspire others, bring together a range of stakeholders to reach a consensus, and summarise complex information concisely to articulate the key points.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including a good understanding of group dynamics and working processes, and the ability to remain flexible and adaptable in a rapidly changing environment.

Selection process

We welcome self-nominations from all relevant research, policy, industry, and end-user backgrounds who are willing to support the funders drive forward this innovative and exciting programme. The Clean Air Programme Board will use the expressions of interest, to inform their decision to appoint the Steering Committee Chair.

The name of the appointed Chair will be posted online including on the: [Clean Air Programme](#) website, [NERC Clean Air Page](#), and [Met Office Clean Air Page](#).

Nomination process and timetable

Self-nominations should be completed via [the online form](#) by 14 December 2020.

Applicants will be informed of decisions by the end of January 2021.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

UKRI and the Met Office are committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. The Clean Air programme's success depends on its ability to embrace diversity and draw on the skills, understanding and experience of its people. The potential rewards of diversity are significant: utilising talent from the widest possible pool can make a major contribution to the impact of research and will benefit the economic and social wellbeing of the UK. Applications from women, those with a disability and members of minority ethnic groups, who are currently under-represented at senior levels in the research and innovation community, are therefore especially encouraged.

We are happy to discuss any concerns an individual might have about whether they can actively Chair the Clean Air Steering Committee and what, if anything, we can do to enable their involvement.

For all enquiries about this opportunity, please email Domnica Radulescu at: pcd@nerc.ukri.org