



UK /China Scoping Workshop: Developing Collaborations in the Natural and Social Sciences in the Areas of Geohazards, Palaeontology and Geofluids (Volatiles)

**Announcement of Workshop
Chengdu, China 19–22 November 2014**

The deadline for applications is 16:00 on 16 October 2014.

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) are inviting applications from UK scientists to attend a jointly organised workshop with the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) in Chengdu on 19–22 November 2014. Over four days the aims of the workshop will be:

- To define the scope of a new UK/China, interdisciplinary call, supported by the Newton Fund, with a focus on increasing social and economic resilience to disasters resulting from earthquakes and associated hazards (eg landslides and mudflows) as part of the NERC/ESRC funded [Increasing Resilience to Natural Hazards \(IRNH\) programme](#).
- To showcase work done under the NERC [Long Term Co-Evolution of Life and the Planet \(LIFE\) programme](#) together with relevant programmes in China and discuss future ideas.
- To explore opportunities for scientists on the new NERC [Volatiles, Geodynamics & Solid Earth Controls on the Habitable Planet programme](#) to work with researchers in China.
- To explore opportunities for potential future collaboration in the areas of geohazards, palaeontology and geofluids (volatiles) and where appropriate, their associated social dimensions.

The workshop will include an optional one-day field visit on Saturday 22 November.

UK/China Increasing Resilience to Natural Hazards (IRNH) Newton fund call

NERC and ESRC, working with NSFC, are planning a major new investment that will provide an opportunity for UK and Chinese natural and social scientists to form substantial research collaborations which aim to increase the resilience of communities affected by earthquakes and associated secondary hazards such as landslides, subsidence and mudflows. The exact level of investment is still to be confirmed, but NERC and ESRC have committed up to £3m of Newton funding in this area over a four-year period, and NSFC will commit equivalent funding. Collaborations under the call will contribute to economic development and social welfare in China, in line with the Newton Fund's aims.

A primary aim of the workshop will be to discuss the key science challenges, research effort needed and how to address these within the proposed new call. The workshop will also facilitate networking and discussion to enable researchers to share ideas on key research questions relevant to the call.

The workshop's outcome will shape the scope of the future call. It will also generate ideas for potential future areas of research collaboration.

Attendance at the workshop does not automatically enable project bids to be submitted or guarantee funding. Conversely, absence does not preclude bidding into the call.

The RCUK China Office has helped facilitate the development of this collaboration, and RCUK China colleagues will be helping run the workshop. The full programme and further details will be available in early November 2014.

Background and aims of the IRNH Programme

The Increasing Resilience to Natural Hazards programme aims to increase social and economic resilience in earthquake-prone and volcanic regions by reducing risks from multiple natural hazards. The programme aims (i) to improve hazard forecasting, risk mitigation and preparedness based upon reliable knowledge of the fundamental processes involved and underpinned by basic science and, (ii) improve the uptake of and responses to scientific advice, by developing risk-based approaches to natural hazards in collaboration with the communities at risk.

The longer-term economic and social costs of disasters resulting from earthquakes, and associated hazards (eg landslides and mudflows) are immense, through damage to local or regional economies, impacts on long-term health, well-being, business, housing and education. This programme aims to combine and build on the strengths of natural and social sciences and has the potential to reduce losses over time, help preparation and post-event management, and minimise vulnerability and long-term damage.

One of the programme's principal goals is to integrate natural and social science research across the programme to increase the benefits for those affected by natural hazards. To that end a co-productive approach to research is expected, involving a framework for sharing knowledge and values between natural and social scientists and consultation with policy makers, civil society and other stakeholders.

The workshop – how to apply

To attend the workshop you must complete the expression of interest ("Eoi") form, following the instructions provided on the form. The form, together with a CV of no more than two sides of A4, should be sent to IRNHNWT@nerc.ac.uk by 16:00 on 16 October 2014. Invited participants will be notified in the week commencing 20 October. Submission of these documents will be taken as indicating availability on the dates of the workshop.

Applicants should outline their relevant area of expertise, any current overseas collaborations and links, and their personal rationale for being involved in the workshop. They should also state in which of the workshop themes they have a specific interest. Please note that the total number of participants from the UK is limited and NERC/ESRC will try to ensure a balance of different disciplines/expertise and the number of attendees from the same institution. It is expected that up to 25 UK participants will be invited.

NERC will cover all reasonable travel expenses for UK participants attending the workshop in line with NERC policy on recovering travel and subsistence. Accommodation and subsistence expenses whilst in China will be covered by NSFC & RCUK China.



For further information please contact:

NERC: Ann Kemp / Lesley Aspinall

Email: ansi@nerc.ac.uk / laa@nerc.ac.uk

Tel: 01793 411762 / 01793 411536

ESRC: Chis Noyce E-mail: Christopher.Noyce@esrc.ac.uk

Tel: 01793 444189