Announcement of Opportunity: Valuing Nature Programme Discipline Hopping Fellowships

Call published: 13th May 2014

Closing date for full proposals: 14th August 2014, 16.00 GMT

Accompanying documents to be read in conjunction with this announcement:
Valuing Nature Theme Action Plan
http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/funded/programmes/valuingnature/vn-tap.pdf

1. Summary

As part of their commitment to the Living With Environmental Change (LWEC) Partnership, the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) are inviting proposals for three-year discipline-hopping Fellowships which will contribute to addressing the goals of the Valuing Nature programme.

The Valuing Nature programme is a five year interdisciplinary research programme which aims to better understand and represent the complexities of the natural environment in valuation analyses and to consider the wider societal and cultural value of ecosystems services by extending the concept of value beyond perceived market value. It will do this through a mix of research, network and cross-discipline and impact activities.

This call is for discipline-hopping Research Fellowship proposals of a maximum of **36 months duration**. It is expected up to three Fellowships may be awarded to support environmental researchers to develop social science (including economic) expertise in relation to the goals of the Valuing Nature programme and for social scientists (including economists) to gain natural science expertise in relation to the goals of the Valuing Nature programme.

Funds of up to £900k (80% FEC) are available in support of this call.

2.   Background

There is increasing recognition that global economic growth and development are depleting the planet's natural resources, and doing so at an accelerating rate. The increase in the world's population growth, coupled with a rapid growth in consumption, is placing the world's ecosystems under intense pressure. Ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss are among the most pressing challenges of the 21st century. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA)[1] in 2005 highlighted the need to better recognise the values and benefits people derive from ecosystems by bringing together existing knowledge. In 2011, the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) published a comprehensive assessment of the services provided by UK ecosystems[2]. This work developed a conceptual framework for linking ecosystem services and human well-being through a more comprehensive assessment of the values people receive than had been attempted previously. This work clearly showed that taking into account the values of services for which there is no market would profoundly alter policies regarding land-use. The NEA has had a major impact on UK environment policy, playing a key role in shaping the Natural Environment and Water White Papers, and directly leading to the establishment of the Natural Capital Committee (NCC), which reports to the Treasury on the state of natural capital in England, and published its second annual State of Natural Capital report[3] in March 2014.

Despite the rapidly growing importance of valuing nature in the business and policy arenas, significant research challenges remain in this area. A major challenge concerns capturing the diverse forms of value associated with nature and how to represent the complexities of the natural environment in valuation analyses in ways that take account of the interests of future as well as current generations. Addressing these challenges has been made more difficult by the lack of an inter-disciplinary research community capable of working across two or more of the natural, social, and biological sciences, and the arts and humanities. In recognition of this, NERC led the establishment of the Valuing Nature Network (VNN)[4] in 2011. The goals of the VNN were to: (1) facilitate the development of an inter-disciplinary research community well-connected with end- users and with the capacity to undertake world-leading valuation work; and (2) identify the key research issues that needed to be addressed in going forward. When the VNN was established, the intention was that once a research community and associated agenda had been developed, a follow- on research programme would be required.

3.   The Valuing Nature programme

To deliver a better understanding of the complexities of the natural environment in valuation analyses, and to consider and question the wider societal and cultural value of ecosystems services, the Valuing Nature programme has three main goals:

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[1] Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. 2005. *Ecosystems and human well-being: Synthesis.* Washington D.C., Island Press.
[2] UK National Ecosystem Assessment. 2011. Synthesis of the key findings. DEFRA.
[3] http://www.naturalcapitalcommittee.org/home.html
[4] http://valuing-nature.net/

1) To improve our understanding of (i) the links between ecosystem stocks and tipping points, (ii) how the values of ecosystem services change as tipping points are reached and exceeded, and (iii) critical levels of natural capital that avoid abrupt and damaging ecosystem change.

(2) To improve our understanding of the role biodiversity and ecosystem processes play in human health and wellbeing, in three areas: (i) natural hazards and extreme events, (ii) the exposure of people to vector-borne diseases and marine toxins, and (iii) health and wellbeing improvements associated with urban ecosystems (green space).

(3) To continue to provide time-limited support to the Valuing Nature Network (VNN).

Goal one will be delivered through this discipline-hopping fellowships call and a subsequent call for small interdisciplinary grants. Goal two will be delivered through a call for a number of large interdisciplinary research grants. The call for a Programme Coordination Team that includes delivery against Goal three, has already been issued, and is now closed.

4. Requirements

4.1 Scientific

The purpose of this call is to support early-career researchers who wish to develop their understanding of the challenges identified in Goal 1 by developing their research expertise in a different discipline. The fellowships will address the aim of the programme by improving our understanding and questioning of:

(i) the complexities of the natural environment in valuation analyses;
(ii) the wider societal and cultural value of ecosystems services;
(iii) the links between ecosystem stocks and tipping points;
(iv) how the values of ecosystem services change as tipping points are reached and exceeded; and
(v) critical levels of natural capital that avoid abrupt and damaging ecosystem change.

It is anticipated that some of the successful fellows will build upon and make use of data and information from recent or existing research initiatives in this area – including for example Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service Sustainability (BESS)[5], Insect Pollinators Initiative (IPI)[6], BiodivERsA[7], NEA and NEAFO[8], SEER[9], RELU[10], ESPA[11], and the STEPS centre[12].

The paragraphs below illustrate the range of agendas and challenges that the discipline-hopping fellowships could address; it should be emphasised that they are indicative only.

The concepts of 'ecosystem stocks' and 'natural capital' have been introduced to highlight the essential role of the natural environment in sustaining human life and the wider global economy.

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5   http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/funded/programmes/bess/
6   https://wiki.ceh.ac.uk/display/ukipi/Home
7   http://www.biodiversa.org/
8   http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/
9   http://cserge.ac.uk/current-research-projects/seer
10 http://www.relu.ac.uk/
11 http://www.espa.ac.uk/
12 http://steps-centre.org/

These 'stocks' and 'capital' are seen as analogous to financial stocks and capital assets in market-based economies. While the terms are not without their critics, they have enabled ecosystem science to capture the important feedbacks between these natural capital assets (ecosystem stocks) and the benefits or ecosystem services derived from these. If the exploitation of an ecosystem service increases, stocks often decline, reducing the capacity of the stock to support service flows in the future. Stock depletion can reach a threshold where there is an abrupt decline in service flows i.e. a 'tipping point'. A number of marine fisheries show this type of pattern - as mortality increases through over-fishing (i.e. as the exploitation of the ecosystem service increases), fish stocks can decline to the point at which catches collapse[13]. Stock recovery can then take a very long time[14]. With the exception of these well-studied examples, our understanding of the relationships between stocks and services is patchy but improving significantly.

Over the last 5 years, a number of programmes such as BESS, IPI, and BiodivERsA, amongst others have begun generating data on ecosystem stocks and services. These data can be used to define tipping points as well as the ability of natural capital to renew itself and potentially reverse degradation. This knowledge can then be incorporated into measurements of natural capital, thus providing an opportunity to significantly develop our understanding in this area.

The primary drivers of ecosystem degradation, stock depletion and tipping points are anthropogenic; they stem from economic systems and lifestyles resourced by excess consumption of finite natural resources. How societies can respond to these anthropogenic threats to ecosystem stocks, and do so at a scale and timescale commensurate with the challenge, requires researchers to work both within and beyond their disciplines. Critiquing and challenging existing paradigms as well as developing new conceptual frameworks and methodologies will be integral to advancing science and policy to promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

Some economic techniques are available for valuation and cost-benefit analysis. However, inter-disciplinary approaches are required to refine and refashion these concepts and methodologies and to gain a broader view of the challenges around the relationship between environmental processes and stocks and how they are valued.

For example, a better understanding is needed of the spatial and temporal variation in natural capital and ecosystem services including rates of change, potential thresholds and (ir)reversibility. A better understanding is needed, too, of how value systems and behaviours are culturally determined, and how they vary over time and context e.g. the marked historical and societal differences in the values attached to nature, to consumption-based lifestyles, to future generation etc. These challenges are aligned to the priority research gaps identified by the Natural Capital Committee's second State of Natural Capital report[15], and are also highly relevant to the work of the National Ecosystem Assessment Follow-on.

The social sciences clearly bring much to these existing valuation paradigms and methodologies, but can also potentially have a transformative contribution through raising questions about Valuing Nature - conceptually and methodogically; making genuine challenges to the existing frameworks

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13   Cook, R.M. et al. (1997) Potential collapse of North Sea cod stocks. Nature 385, 521.
14   Hutchings, J.A. (2000) Collapse and recovery of marine fishes. Nature 406, 882.
15   http://www.naturalcapitalcommittee.org/home.html

and assumptions. Such questioning could draw on a range of social science disciplines and their interest in, for example, culture, identity, ecological relationalities, sustainability, and of course human/non-human relations. Such questions could go to the heart of challenges of the Valuing Nature Programme, exploring the conceptual and methodological differences between disciplines as well as contributing to broadening of existing valuation methodologies.

Projects are expected to be multi-disciplinary, incorporating research within the applicants own current field, and a significant amount of complementary research within the natural or social sciences that the applicant wishes to develop skills in , i.e. environmental researchers developing social science (including economic) expertise; and social scientists (including economists) developing natural science expertise. Proposals should articulate a structured programme of research that clearly draws on one or more of the environmental science disciplines and one or more social science discipline to advance understanding of the links between ecosystem stocks, services and value and how to value and protect the natural environment. The fellowship must include training and mentoring/supervision outside the discipline/s in which the applicant has their first and higher degree.

> In order to facilitate connections and collaboration between potential applicants and mentors, a 'VNNConnect' space will be available on the VNN website, see: http://www.valuing-nature.net/people/vnnConnect

Please refer to Annex A for further details.

4.2   Data Management

NERC and ESRC believe that data generated from the research they fund is a valuable long-term, public-good resource.

To ensure the data can be fully exploited in support of the activities that they were collected for, and to enable them to be available for effective, longer-term, post-programme exploitation, it is NERCs policy that data must be managed effectively from the time of generation onwards (http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/data/policy/). NERC grant-holders in academia are also required to offer to lodge with NERC a copy of the data resulting from the supported research when it is completed, together with documentation / metadata describing these data.

ESRC is committed to long-term preservation, high quality data management and strengthening the provision for secondary data analysis. ESRC's data management policy can be viewed at http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-esrc/information/data-policy.aspx Where social scientific data is to be generated as part of a fellowship, appropriate consideration should be given to this policy.

Applicants are required to submit an outline data management plan **and are required to pay careful consideration to data management needs and discuss any extra-ordinary needs with the NERC Environmental Information Data Centre (EIDC) and the UK Data Service.** In particular, applicants should consider the following points:

- What data are planned for collection and which of these data are perceived as having long-term value?
- What existing data will be required? Who will supply these data and will there be a cost?
- What level of data management support is going to be required from the EIDC data centre or the UK Data Service?

- What, if any, specialist data and informatics skills will be required by the programme and from where will these be obtained?

There will be no charge to the project for a NERC Data Centre to accept and manage the agreed data sets at the end of the grant. **However, any costs for data management activities internal to the project should be costed and clearly identified within the proposal**.

There will be a programme-wide Data Management Policy and Plan developed, with which the projects will be expected to comply.

4.3   Pathways to Impact

Excellence with impact is a central goal for NERC and ESRC. The Councils aim to deliver maximum economic and societal benefits from our investments, to support UK economic competitiveness, to make public services and policy more effective, and to improve people's health and wellbeing.

To achieve this we need excellent impact activities, which anticipate and deliver the needs of the ultimate users of our science, whether they are in business, policy, the third-sector, the wider public or other groups.

The Research Councils' policy is that grant applicants are responsible for considering how their research will or might achieve impact outside the scientific community and submit this with their proposal as a 'Pathways to Impact' statement. The plan will identify those who may benefit from or make use of the research, how they might benefit and/or make use of the research, how they can be involved in project design and methods for disseminating data/knowledge/skills in the most effective and appropriate manner, from the outset.

Pathways to Impact activities do not have to be cost–incurring; it is not a requirement to include funded activities. However any funds required to undertake any proposed activities outlined in the Pathways to Impact Plan should be clearly identified and requested via the Je-S form, and must be fully justified within the Justification of Resources statement.

Pathways to Impact submissions will be assessed but they are not used in proposal ranking; however grants will not be allowed to start without an acceptable Pathways to Impact statement.

Individual Councils' approaches vary so please note that proposals submitted to NERC should adhere to the NERC policy and guidance detailed on the [website](#) and in the [NERC Research Grants](#) [Handbook](#).

A programme-wide Impact Strategy will also be developed, and applicants will be expected to work with the Programme Coordination Team and Programme Executive Board, to maximise the impact of the programme as a whole.

4.4   Programme Governance and Reporting

NERC Swindon Office, on behalf of the funders, retains the overall executive authority for the governance and management of the programme. It will be responsible for:

- the overall Research Programme budget, including the high-level budget management and allocation of resources, e.g. profiling of funds within the programme budget and awards for research and funds for procurement of services

- commissioning, delivery and management of key funding opportunities, including authorisation of funding decisions, issuance of awards, post-award administration and payments, and award completion.

The Programme Executive Board (PEB) is chaired by the NERC Head of Terrestrial Sciences, and includes representative(s) from ESRC and the other programme funders and relevant users/stakeholders as required. The PEB will provide the strategic direction for the programme and will be the ultimate decision-making authority.

The Programme Coordination Team will lead and coordinate activities within the Valuing Nature programme and link and develop synergies with other relevant initiatives of the funders; facilitate two-way knowledge exchange between researchers and policy/practitioner audiences; and maintain an oversight of the funded research activities, ensuring progress in delivery against the programme objectives. **The successful Fellows will be expected to cooperate and work with the Programme Coordination Team in order to ensure a successful programme outcome and maximise its impact.**

In order for the funders to manage performance against their Strategic Objectives and Delivery Plan and report to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the funders' Councils, suppliers of strategic research are required to report regularly on the outputs and outcomes they have been commissioned to deliver. The Fellow (PI) will be required to submit the following:
- regular reporting on the outputs, outcomes and impacts of the project using the Research Outcomes System (ROS); and
- other reporting as required by the Programme Coordination Team and Executive Board, in order to enable them to monitor progress against the programmes objectives, and meet their own institutional reporting responsibilities.

5. Eligibility and funding

This opportunity is open to individuals and organisations eligible for RCUK funding, i.e. applicants based in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), RCUK Research and Collaborative Centres, and Independent Research Organisations (IRO's) that are eligible to receive NERC or ESRC Managed Mode funding. Please refer the RCUK website for more information http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/funding/eligibilityforrcs/.

The Valuing Nature Fellowship call is open to any nationality, and the fellowship applicant is the Principal Investigator on the award. No co-investigators or studentships are allowed on the proposal.

Applicants must have a maximum of eight years of full-time postdoctoral research experience from the PhD certificate date to the closing date of the fellowship competition. The eight year window is based on full-time working. Where applicants have worked part-time or had research career breaks, the eight year window would be extended accordingly. For this call, applicants which meet the above criteria and with a permanent academic position (or equivalent in institutions other than universities) are also eligible and should be seconded from this position to the fellowship for the duration. For further enquiries about please refer to the contacts at the end of this document

Applicants must expect to submit their PhD thesis before the fellowship interview would take place (December 2014). The proposed project start date stated on proposals should be no later than February 2015. The actual start date may be postponed by up to three months from the proposed start date shown on the award letter (the duration of the grant remaining unchanged). It's generally

expected that the Fellow <u>start by May 2015 in order to ensure that the fellowship can be completed by the scheduled end-date for the Valuing Nature programme.</u> Exceptions under certain circumstances maybe allowed, with agreement from NERC. Institutions will need to demonstrate the intention to award a PhD by the Fellowship start date otherwise the offer may be withdrawn.

Further information can be found in NERC Research Grants and Fellowships Handbook, however applicants should note that in other aspects (e.g. eligibility, award duration and scope) the guidance in this document is specific to this call and supersedes that in the Handbook.

As the prospective Fellows will be developing expertise in a new discipline, it is expected that they will spend a significant proportion of their time in the new discipline, recognising that more time may be needed at the beginning of the project as they develop their skills.

6.   Application process

NERC is administering this process on behalf of the other funders.

Full proposals must be submitted using the Research Councils Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S). Please select the Scheme: 'Research Programme Fellowship'; and the Call: 'Valuing Nature – **Discipline-hopping Grants**'.

To use this system, the applicant's Research Organisation must be registered as a Je-S user. Full details are available on the Je-S website. Further information can also be obtained by contacting the Je-S Helpdesk by email at JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk or by telephone on 01793 444164.

Applicants must ensure that their proposal is received by NERC by **4pm** on the closing date of **14th August 2014**.   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 received after the closing date, is incomplete, or does not meet the eligibility criteria, will be returned to the applicant and will not be considered.

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.

1.1.   Proposal Components

All attachments submitted through the JeS system, including the Case for Support, must be completed in single-spaced typescript of minimum font size 11 point, Arial font, with margins of at least 2cm. *References must now also be presented in minimum font size 11 point*. Applicants referring to websites should note that referees may choose not to use them.

Please note the guidance below may be different from that for the NERC Independent Research Fellowships.

Proposals should include:

1.   The **Case for Support** (up to **8 sides A4**) which is comprised of two parts:

Part A – a common *Previous Track Record* (suggestion of up to *2 sides A4*) should:

➢ Provide a summary of the results and conclusions of recent work in at least one of the disciplines/fields that will inform the area that is covered by the research proposal. Include reference to both NERC/ESRC and non-NERC/ESRC funded work. Details of any relevant past collaborative work with other beneficiaries should also be given.

➢ Indicate where your previous work has contributed to the UK's competitiveness or to improving the quality of life.

➢ Outline the specific expertise available for the research at the host organisation(s) and that of any associated organisations and beneficiaries.

Part B – A **Description of the Proposed Research** (suggestion of up to *6 sides A4* including all necessary tables, figures and references) and should address the following points:

➢ Underlying rationale, scientific, technological and other issues to be addressed.

➢ Specific objectives, methodology and approach.

➢ Explanation of how the research will contribute to the objectives Valuing Nature programme and specifically the challenges identified in Goal 1, and interact with the leading international groups in the field.

➢ An explanation of the balance of time required between the current and new disciplines to address the objectives of their particular project.

2. **Outline Data Management plan** (up to **1 side A4**)
The ODMP should identify data sets likely to be made available to NERC Environmental Data Centres and/or UK Data Service for archiving and reuse at the end of the grant (guidance available on http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/data/dmp/ and http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-esrc/information/data-policy.aspx).

3. A **Justification of Resources** (up to **2 sides A4**) for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, use of pool staff resources, any access to shared facilities and equipment and for capital costs. No justification for Directly Allocated Estates and Indirect Costs is required.

The applicant can claim some staff-time costs incurred by the support of the mentor, but not Estates and Indirect costs for them. The mentor should be named in the case for support, and the costs included as Directly Incurred Other.

Fellowship proposals cannot request individual items of equipment (over £10,000), visiting researchers, research assistants or Associated (Project) Studentships.

4. A **Pathways to Impact** Plan (up to **2 sides A4**), detailing:

➢ those who may benefit or make use of the research;

➢ how they might benefit and/or make use of the research;

➢ methods for disseminating data/knowledge/skills in the most effective and appropriate manner.

Full details of the requirements for Pathways to Impact can be found on the NERC website.

Pathways to Impact activities do not have to be costs incurring, it is not a requirement to include funded activities. However any funds required to undertake any proposed activities

outlined in the Pathways to Impact Plan should be clearly identified and requested via the Je-S form, and must be fully justified within the Justification of Resources statement.

5. A **CV** of up to **2 sides of A4** for the fellowship applicant.

6. List of **publications**

7. **Head of Department** statement (up to **2 sides A4**).

   ➤ Applicants must submit a letter from the Head of the applicant's department confirming that they agree to the discipline hop and that, where applicable, appropriate arrangements are in place for the management of current NERC or ESRC research grants held by the applicant during his/her Discipline-Hopping award. This letter should be submitted in the Je-S system as an attachment under 'Head of Department Statement'.

8. **Letters of support from the mentor**, and any collaborators and Project Partners (up to **2 sides A4** each);

   ➤ Where applicable, a letter is required from the partner organisation (or department, if in the same institution) into which the researcher is hopping confirming they agree to host the researcher, and detailing the expertise of the mentor and the training and support they can provide to the Fellow. The commitment and involvement of the mentors will form part of the assessment. This should be submitted in the Je-S system as an attachment under 'Letter of Support'.

9. Application forms for access to NERC Services and Facilities, if applicable - for example Aircraft (ARSF and FAAM), Ship-time/Marine equipment (SME) and for High Performance Computing (HPC) when use of ARCHER exceeds 100 MAU.

10. There is an option for the approver or submitter to include a **reference** for the applicant. This attachment is confidential and not viewable by the applicant.

The detailed research proposed (and costed) on the proposal should be manageable by the Fellow. Some fieldwork or technical assistance can be requested on Fellowship proposals, but the proposal must not include costs for a research assistant and should not assume access to PhD Students.

7. Assessment process

To meet the funders' strategic objectives for the Valuing Nature programme, proposals will be subject to rigorous expert interdisciplinary peer review. Applicants should note that the assessment process may differ from that for the NERC Independent Research Fellowships.

Fellowship proposals will undergo a two-stage peer review process.

1. All proposals received will be assessed by independent experts. An expert panel will then use these reviews to prioritise the proposals and make recommendations on which should go forward to the next stage. Applicants will be notified whether or not their proposal will progress to the second stage.

2. Proposals put forward to the second stage will be invited to an Interview Panel, where they will present their research proposal and can respond to comments made by the reviewers.

Based on the recommendations of the Interview Panel and the strategic needs of the programme, the Valuing Nature Programme Executive Board will agree which fellowships to award.

Feedback to applicants will be available on request.

All Fellowship proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:
- o   Research Excellence
- o   Suitability of Applicant
- o   Suitability and support of mentor
- o   Fit to Scheme
- o   Pathways to Impact

Research Excellence
A proposal that demonstrates excellence can be characterised by terms such as: novel, ambitious, timely, exciting, at the international forefront, adventurous, elegant or transformative, but need not demonstrate all of them.

Suitability of applicant
Applicants should both demonstrate a thorough grasp of their current discipline and some understanding of the new discipline they wish to develop skills in.   They should also show considerable promise as an independent researcher.

Suitability and support of mentor
As these awards support researchers spending a significant proportion of their time developing skills in a new discipline, it is important that applicants have the support and commitment of an appropriate mentor.

Fit to Call
Applicants should fully read this Announcement of Opportunity to ensure their proposal fits the call requirements.

Pathways to Impact
Applicants are required to identify the potential societal and economic impact of their work and to outline the steps they can sensibly make to facilitate the realisation of this impact.   Pathways to Impact submissions will be assessed but they are not used in proposal ranking; however grants will not be allowed to start without an acceptable Pathways to Impact statement.

8.   Timetable
AO published: 13th May 2014
Deadline for proposals: 14th August 2014
Interview panel: December 2014
Grants awarded: Dec-Jan
Grants start   February 2015

9.   Contact information
For further information about the programme please contact Rachel Leader 01793 411595 (valuingnature@nerc.ac.uk).

Further information on the Je-S system can be found on the Je-S website: https://je-s.rcuk.ac.uk/JeS2WebLoginSite/Login.aspx or be obtained by contacting the Je-S Helpdesk by email at JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk or by telephone on 01793 444164.

Annex A: VNNConnect

VNNConnect is the Valuing Nature collaboration space. This space is for you to explore ideas and ways of collaborating with academics from different disciplines and interested stakeholders in preparation for this and future funding and other collaborative opportunities. It is a resource for you to find out who is involved and also to find people with similar interests to yours. VNNConnect is only available if you are registered on the VNN site.

How to take part

To access the VNNConnect space you will need to be logged into the site. If you have never used the VNN site before, you can register quickly and easily by completing the form at http://www.valuing-nature.net/user/register

The only two compulsory fields are name and email address, but please feel free to fill in the rest. When choosing your user name please make sure you use the protocol "John Doe" and not "JJDoe", "J73Doe" etc. This makes it easier for us to see you are a real person. Also make sure you click on the '*Join VNNConnect'* box, under groups.

You will get an automatic email confirming you have joined.

If you are already registered to the site, please log in on the homepage http://www.valuing-nature.net and scroll to 'user log-in' on the bottom right. Enter your Username and Password.

Once logged in, scroll down again and click on "My Account" under "User Menu".
Once there, click on the tab 'edit', scroll down and click on the box "VNNConnect" under ROLES.
Scroll down and click save.
You can update your VNNConnect info any time, under the tab '"VNNConnect"

If you have forgotten your password, you can request a new one from the site here: http://www.valuing-nature.net/user/password

After joining VNNConnect and entering your details you will be able to see the full list and also filter the results by selecting one or multiple interests. Each time a new person joins the group you will be alerted by email. Please use VNNConnect to search for and get in contact with those that you might be interested in working with.http://www.valuing-nature.net/people/vnnConnect