



## **Valuing Nature Programme Announcement of Opportunity:**

### **Understanding the Value of the Natural Environment for Improving Human Health and Wellbeing**

#### **FAQs**

**Q: Are there restrictions on research methods?**

**A:** Methodological innovation to enhance understanding of the value of the natural environment for human health is central to the call. To support and inform this understanding, the panel expects to see a broad range of methods included in proposals. These may include, for example, the use of evidence from scoping and systematic reviews, observational and intervention studies and data linkage, archival and documentary methods, ethnography and oral histories, etc.

**Q: What interdisciplinary approaches are expected?**

**A:** The call aims on supporting research addressing complex key research problems, challenges or questions which cannot be addressed by single disciplines. Thus, successful applications will have an inter-disciplinary team with the required expertise according to the needs of the research problems, challenges or questions addressed by the project.

**Q: Should a bid cover the different funder interests – does it have to cover all 3, what balance?**

**A:** All proposals should integrate expertise from across the 3 funders' representative communities in order to address the research challenge in question, but the balance and mix of expertise from within different funder communities will be dependent on the needs of the research challenge. However, across the whole portfolio of awards in this call, the funders will be looking for a balance which represents their level of interest and commitment.

**Q: Does a bid have to cover all three research areas?**

**A:** Proposals do not have to cover all three research areas. Proposal may cover one, two or three areas as appropriate. If covering more than one research area you should demonstrate how these areas will be integrated.

**Q: Can any discipline be the lead on an application?**

**A:** Yes. We encourage applications from all suitable disciplines to apply as lead PIs.

**Q: Can I include a major field research component?**

**A:** Within the funding available you can include whatever activities are appropriate to deliver the research. We would encourage applicants to draw on existing research also.

**Q: What is the scope of health and medical research that can be included in the call?**

**A:** The scope of health and mental health of this call should be considered in the context of the funders' remit. The remit of ESRC does not include invasive medical practice unless there is a reason for the collection of those data in social science objectives and research questions (for example, social science research questions may require blood samples to be taken). Applicants may also show knowledge of existing medical research and data and link with initiatives from other funding routes. Any queries on this should be directed to [valuingnature@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:valuingnature@nerc.ac.uk)

**Q: Is overseas work permitted?**

**A:** Research should focus on the UK, though reference to international examples may be appropriate.

**Q: Should the scope of a project be national or regional focussed?**

**A:** This is a challenge led call and it is not restricted to either a national or a regional focussed approach.

**Q: Are case studies permitted?**

**A:** Yes. Case studies are permitted and are often useful for stakeholders; however, demonstrating applicability in a broader context is more valuable.

**Q: Should the applications include economics and monetary valuation as well as non-monetary?**

**A:** It depends on whether it is appropriate for the question addressed in the proposal. However it's noted that decisions makers may have to integrate monetary and non-monetary values to make a decision, which has been emphasised as one of the major challenges in improving the use of valuation evidence in decision making.

**Q: How should the Pathways to Impact statement differ from the impact plan of the Valuing Nature Programme?**

**A:** The pathways to impact should be applicable to the project rather than that of the whole Valuing Nature Programme. Applications are advised to create an impact plan that is suitable for the work proposed.

**Q: Am I eligible for funding if outside UK / not an HEI etc.?**

**A:** Applicants must be from a UK Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), RCUK Research and Collaborative Centres, and Independent Research Organisations (IRO's) that are eligible to receive NERC, AHRC or ESRC Managed Mode funding. A list of eligible institutions and organisations can be found here: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/eligibilityiros.pdf>

**Q: How can my business be involved?**

**A:** Businesses can be project partners by offering in-kind support; however, they cannot be in direct receipt of funding. We consider eligible institutions to be best placed to determine how their work is undertaken. If this involves sub-contracting aspects of the work to non-eligible institutions due, for example, to the lack of appropriate expertise in eligible

institutions, this is acceptable. In such circumstances, the funders would pay the awarded eligible institution which in turn would sub-contract to the service provider as appropriate. Further information is available on the NERC grants handbook; point 153 onwards: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/howtoapply/forms/grantshandbook/>

**Q: Are studentships permitted on this call?**

**A:** No.

**Q: Does NERC's demand management apply to this call?**

**A:** No. There is no limit on the number of applications submitted to this call per institution.

**Q: How will decisions be made?**

**A:** The applications will go through a formal peer review process and then assessed via a panel with the appropriate inter-disciplinary expertise. The panel will assess the research excellence and the integration of interdisciplinary research. Applicants will have the chance to respond to any comments made in the peer review by written PI response stage. The panel will recommend a final ranked list to the Programme Executive Board who will have the final decision.

**Q: What is the role of the PCT in bidding process?**

**A:** The PCT can help facilitate partnerships with researchers, businesses and users through the 'offers' function on the website (<http://www.valuing-nature.net/offers>) and give general advice on the scope of the call. The PCT are not involved in the assessment process and will not take part of the reviewing process, the panel or in decisions on funding.