Application Pack for NERC Science Committee Members

September 2021

Closing date for all applications: 15 October 2021 4pm (GMT)

Interviews will take place: 03 December 2021 (To be held virtually)

Induction: January 2022

Date of first meeting: 2 & 3 February 2022

Members:
APPLICATION PACK SCIENCE COMMITTEE
APPOINTMENTS

CONTENTS

Page 3  Introduction
Page 4  Role and responsibilities of Science Committee
         Members
Page 5  Person specification
Page 6  Appointments
Page 6  Meeting arrangements
Page 6  Honorarium
Page 7  How to Apply
Page 8  The Seven Principles of Public Life
INTRODUCTION

NERC - the Natural Environment Research Council - is the driving force of investment in environmental science in the UK. NERC advances the frontier of environmental science by commissioning new research, infrastructure and training that delivers valuable scientific breakthroughs. We do this because understanding our changing planet is vital for our wellbeing and economic prosperity.

We invest public money in world-leading science, designed to help us sustain and benefit from our natural resources, predict and respond to natural hazards and understand environmental change. We work closely with policymakers and industry to make sure our knowledge can support sustainable economic growth and wellbeing in the UK and around the world.

NERC is part of UK Research & Innovation (https://www.ukri.org/), a body which works in partnership with universities, research organisations, businesses, charities and government to create the best possible environment for research and innovation to flourish. UKRI aims to maximise the contribution of each of its component parts, working individually and collectively. We work with our many partners to benefit everyone through knowledge, talent and ideas.

We are supported mainly by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), but our activities and funding decisions are independent of government.

For further information on NERC see: NERC website.
ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NERC SCIENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NERC is looking to appoint two members to the NERC Science Committee with expertise as set out in the person specification section.

Science Committee will bring broad strategic perspective and expertise to support the development and delivery of the UKRI-NERC strategic priorities, investments and policies.

The Committee will advise the Executive and Council across NERC’s research, innovation, training and national capability portfolio, and will recommend NERC strategic research and innovation investments.

Members sit on the Committee as individuals, rather than representing a particular organisation and will provide advice on:

- How to support an excellent and sustainable UK environmental science community that seizes opportunities, in UKRI and international contexts, to achieve the following goals:
  - to advance the frontiers of knowledge;
  - to address government, UKRI and NERC strategic priorities;
  - to deliver beneficial economic and social impacts.

- Priority areas for future rounds of NERC strategic research and innovation investment.

- Commissioning, effectiveness and performance of NERC and UKRI investments including: discovery science; strategic research and innovation; postgraduate training, fellowships and early career support; national capability; scientific infrastructure and capital; international partnership and subscriptions.

- NERC funding policy for all of the above funding streams.

Provide recommendations for new NERC investment:

- Strategic Research and Innovation Programmes – assess submitted proposals against published criteria and recommend which proposals should be funded by NERC.

- Strategic Research and Innovation Highlight Topics - assess submitted ideas for Highlight Topic against published criteria and recommend which should go forward to a funding call, and at what level of expenditure.

The Terms of Reference are be available: Science Committee Terms of Reference

Actions of the Science Committee and its members are subject to the UKRI-NERC governance framework and the seven principles of public life.
PERSON SPECIFICATION

Applications are sought from individuals who possess a range of expertise and experience in research and innovation across the higher education sector. You should have a range of subject matter knowledge appropriate to the Council’s areas of research, innovation, training and capital, or other lay experience of benefit to NERC’s wider strategic ambitions. NERC is seeking broad representation across our community reflecting different characteristics and professional backgrounds.

Our ideal candidate will have the enthusiasm and time to commit to advise us on how we can best achieve our Delivery Plan ambitions.

**Essential Skills**

We are seeking candidates that can communicate well and work collaboratively to support and challenge the Science Committee’s debates and fellow members, and have two or more of the following four skills:

- Understanding of the environmental challenges confronting the world based on a deep understanding of environmental science with a whole-systems, solution-focused approach.

- Insights to support NERC’s responsible business statement ambitions and to be a UKRI lead for environmental sustainability.

- Recognised expertise as an environmental scientist: the following backgrounds would be particularly welcome at this time:
  - Earth sciences, particularly solid Earth and/or
  - Oceanography

- Experience in strategic planning and pre-sight of large investment portfolios and programmes involving some or all of: research; innovation; training and skills; scientific infrastructures and services; international partnership.

The total time commitment for Science Committee members is expected to be up to 20 days pa.
APPOINTMENTS

The successful candidates will be appointed by the Natural Environment Research Council, on the recommendation of a selection panel.

At NERC as part of UKRI we believe that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed within an ethical and trusted working environment that enables them to do so and that is attractive and accessible to everyone who is interested in developing their career with us.

We also value diversity of thought and experience and are committed to creating systems that value difference so that everyone can feel welcomed, included and nurtured throughout their time with us. For further information, please visit ‘How we support EDI in the workforce’

At NERC as part of UKRI are proud to be users of the disability confident scheme. We guarantee to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for any of our vacancies. There is a section on the application form to indicate if you would like to be considered under this scheme.

The members will be appointed for a period of three years, subject to annual performance review.

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Availability

The successful candidate will be expected to participate in all formal Science Committee meetings (4 per year). Some meetings will be virtual, and some will be face to face.

The successful candidate will be expected to participate in the Council Retreat (once a year)

For meetings to be quorate there must be at least half the Committee members in attendance.

Location

Meeting will be held in various UK locations

HONORARIUM

An attendance allowance (for meetings) of £170 per day (if eligible) together with reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be reimbursed in accordance with UKRI’s travel and subsistence policy (PDF, 162KB).
HOW TO APPLY AND HOW MEMBERS WILL BE SELECTED

To apply, candidates should submit a CV (limited to two sides) and a completed application form to Gemma Davies (SwindonGDSAdmin@nerc.ukri.org) by 4pm (GMT) on 15 October 2021. If you have any questions about the recruitment process, please also contact Gemma Davies.

Once the deadline has passed, all applications (CV and application form) will be acknowledged and then passed to the selection panel (see below) to review the applications against the person specification. The panel will agree which applicants will be selected for interview. Further particulars will be provided to candidates selected for interview.

At the final appointment stages, where applicants are as qualified on merit, the selection panel will seek to achieve a balanced membership in terms of, for example, diversity, expertise and experience.

The selection panel for the Members of Science Committee appointments will be:

- Professor Graham Underwood, Chair of NERC Science Committee and Professor of Marine and Freshwater Biology in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Essex
- Professor Susan Waldron, NERC Director, Research and Skills
- Clare Matterson CBE, NERC Council member and Executive Director of Engagement for the Natural History Museum.
- Professor John Remedios; National Centre for Earth Observation (NCEO) Director.

The timescale for selection and appointments are in the tables below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role advertised</td>
<td>06 September 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for applications</td>
<td>15 October 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortlisting decisions sent to candidates</td>
<td>18 November 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>03 December 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointments confirmed</td>
<td>December 2021/ January 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First meeting</td>
<td>2 &amp; 3 February 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please send the completed application, stating clearly the appointment you are applying for, to:

By email: SwindonGDSAdmin@nerc.ukri.org Attention of: Gemma Davies

By post:

Attention of: Gemma Davies
Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) Polaris House,
North Star Avenue, Swindon
SN2 1EU
The Seven Principles of Public Life

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way.

Consistent with the Commissioner’s Code of Practice, applicants will be assessed on merit, and all candidates for public appointment will need to uphold the standards of conduct set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life. These will be tested as part of the selection process and the selection Panel must satisfy itself that all candidates for appointments can meet these standards; which are:

Selflessness
Holders of Public Office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity
Carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability
Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness
Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty
Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership
Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.