

# **NERC RESEARCH GRANTS HANDBOOK**

## **RESEARCH GRANTS AWARDED ON FULL ECONOMIC COST BASIS**

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**Edition 2005 –1.3**  
**NOVEMBER 2005**

# **NERC RESEARCH GRANTS 2005**

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**Edition 2005-1.3 NOVEMBER 2005: for research grant applications from 1 September 2005 (after introduction of full economic costing) only. For applications made before 1 September 2005, please refer to Edition 2004 1.3**

## **Foreword**

This handbook sets out the regulations governing research grants awarded by the Natural Environment Research Council. It sets out the application procedures and eligibility requirements. It also outlines the funding and facilities available to grant-holders, and details the responsibilities of NERC, Investigators and Research Organisations. It must be read in conjunction with the core terms and conditions that have been agreed across all Research Councils. These are outlined in Annex F to Section C of the Handbook.

The handbook focuses on grants awarded through the NERC Blue Skies and Directed Research Programmes. Separate handbooks, also available at this website, cover the regulations for NERC Fellowships and NERC Studentships.

NERC reserves the right to amend these regulations at any time and without prior notice. The regulations in effect at any time will be those contained in the most recent version of this booklet, available on the NERC website at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms>.

Please note that the financial conditions for applications received from 1 September 2005 differ to those governing awards made previously, due to the implementation of full economic costing.

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## Section A - INTRODUCTION

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### General Principles

1. The NERC research grants schemes are intended to provide financial support for environmental scientists to conceive and develop their own projects in UK universities and other approved institutions. The scientific research carried out under NERC research grants should be ethically sound, innovative and of the highest quality, and must fall within the NERC scientific remit (see Annexe B).
2. For applications from 1 September 2005, new research grants will be awarded on the basis of a proportion of the full economic cost (fEC), calculated in accordance with the TRAC (Transparent Approach to Costing) methodology (Universities and other Higher Education bodies) or by an equivalent methodology by other Research Organisations. The proportion of fEC will be 80% from 1 September 2005.
3. Awards are made to eligible scientists or groups of scientists ('Investigators'), for a specified period and to carry out a defined programme of research or research related activity. The Investigators will be involved in the leadership and management of the research project. Awards might cover, for example:
  - The Investigator(s) entering promising new fields of research;
  - Taking advantage of developments in theory, practice or instrumentation applicable to environmental research;
  - Visiting a recognised centre abroad, for example to study a particular technique;
  - Senior scientists visiting the Investigator's own institution to provide advice and assistance in their own area of expertise; or
  - Knowledge transfer between NERC's science base and the users of environmental research.
4. Applications are normally assessed through independent scientific peer review. In evaluating proposals and selecting the best research, NERC uses the knowledge, advice and expertise of its Peer Review College or an equivalent panel of experts. Membership of the NERC Peer Review College comprises research practitioners as well as public and private sector representatives of the science user community.
5. Award-holders will be given the freedom to develop the work in their own way, but NERC is obliged to retain adequate control over the use of public funds. Whilst there will be scope for flexibility in planning and executing the research, major changes from the programme originally proposed will need NERC's prior approval.
6. NERC requires that both a Final Expenditure Statement and Final Report be received at the end of each award. Failure to submit such documentation may result in sanctions being imposed on the Principal Investigator and his/her institution. For the purposes of accountability, for split and consortium awards there will be one Principal Investigator and one lead institution, who will take the responsibility for the management of the overall award and be liable to sanctions if the award is not completed satisfactorily (see Section G).
7. NERC is committed to increasing public awareness of and public engagement with the science it supports. The obligations and expectations for all applicants are set out in Section D.
8. NERC is also committed to exploiting the science that it supports to the advantage of the UK. This might be by informing Government policy, improving current procedures and practices or contributing to new products and services (see also Section J).
9. NERC encourages collaborations between scientists in eligible institutions, and all applicants should consider the possibility of collaboration with other scientists in the UK and overseas when formulating proposals. Part of the assessment of a proposal will be based on the relationship with similar work

being carried out elsewhere, and whether full advantage will be taken of opportunities for consultation and co-operation.

## **Section B – TYPES OF AWARD**

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- 10.** NERC supports a number of grant schemes through its Blue Skies, Knowledge Transfer and Directed funding schemes. Whilst the exact conditions and closing dates vary, applicants for all of the schemes outlined below must meet the eligibility criteria set out in Section C.

### **BLUE SKIES**

- 11.** Blue Skies funding is intended to support excellent, curiosity driven environmental science, free from boundaries. It is NERC's intention that blue skies funding should support the best science, with scientific excellence as the overriding criterion for assessment. While blue skies science should fit within the NERC remit (see Annexe B), it is not required to match specified themes. NERC believes that blue skies science should provide the opportunity for freethinking, risk-taking and innovation. Within these parameters, NERC operates a number of funding schemes: Standard, Small, New Investigator and Consortium Grants.

#### **Standard Grants**

- 12.** Standard grants are for a minimum of £25,000 for Directly Incurred costs (total of costs under this heading) and usually provide funding for up to three years (although applications for grants for longer periods will be accepted).
- 13.** The closing dates for applications are 1 July and 1 December. See Section F for details of the application and assessment procedures.

#### **Consortium Grants**

- 14.** Consortium grants support focussed, co-ordinated, collaborative research into specific issues that cannot be addressed through standard grants. To promote flexibility and collaboration, consortium grants necessarily blur the boundaries between NERC funding modes.
- 15.** Consortium grants can address any areas of science within the NERC remit, including NERC strategic priorities or new curiosity-driven research challenges. Applications are welcome from a minimum of three eligible Research Organisations (see Section C), with each Research Organisation being separately awarded funds. The consortium will retain ownership and management of the science programme, and NERC will expect a lead Research Organisation to act as co-ordinator.
- 16.** Consortium grants provide funding for up to five years with costs ranging, as required by the research, from modest sums up to a maximum of £3.5 million. This limit applies to the total (100%) FEC of the project, of which NERC will fund 80%. The total cost includes any tied studentships and major facility costs (e.g. ship time, air time, high performance computing). Tied studentships should be assumed to cost a total of £60,000 for a three year studentship.
- 17.** Prospective applicants must discuss their proposal with the appropriate Science and Innovation Manager and submit a concept note (see Section F for details). Notification of intention to submit a proposal and submission of a concept note can be made at any time. The closing dates for full consortium applications are 1 July and 1 December.

#### **Small Grants**

- 18.** Small grants provide funding for small discrete projects, proof-of-concept studies, pump-priming exercises etc. This scheme is not intended to extend the period of employment of a research assistant once a standard grant has ended. The maximum funding that may be sought is £25,000 for the total Directly Incurred costs (i.e. the limit applies to 100% of costs under this heading). In addition, NERC will pay the standard proportion (i.e. 80%) of Directly Allocated and Indirect Costs

(see Section D for details of cost categories). Small grant funds may not be split between Research Organisations. No studentships are awarded under this scheme.

- 19.** The next closing date for applications for small grants is **1 September 2006**. See Section F for details of the application and assessment procedures.

### **New Investigator Grants**

- 20.** The New Investigators' scheme is for Investigators at the outset of their scientific career (for eligibility see section C), with an annual closing date of 1 February. Applicants must be the sole Investigator, and may submit only one application per year. See Section F for details of the application and assessment procedure. The maximum funding that may be sought is £40,000 for the total Directly Incurred costs (i.e. the limit applies to 100% of costs under this heading). In addition NERC will pay the standard proportion (i.e. 80%) of Directly Allocated and Indirect costs (see Section D for details of costs categories). No studentships are awarded under this scheme.

### **Research Councils/MoD Joint Research Grants Scheme (JGS)**

- 21.** Since 1985, MoD has allocated funds through the JGS, currently over £5M per annum, to jointly support high quality basic and strategic research of relevance to defence needs. The funding is open to anyone eligible for research council funding and is particularly suited to the development of new research links.
- 22.** Prospective applicants wishing to be part supported through the Scheme are required to discuss their proposed research with MoD personnel in advance of applying. If MoD agrees to co-fund the project, it will inform the applicant by letter. An application should then be made to NERC through either the Standard Grant, Partnership Research Grant or Consortium Grant schemes. Please note that NERC will only accept an application if it has already been forwarded to the Defence Science Technology Laboratory (DSTL) and written confirmation of agreement to co-fund the project has been received from the DSTL. The letter from DSTL must accompany the proposal upon submission to NERC.
- 23.** Further details about the Scheme, including MoD areas of interest and contacts, are given on the DSTL web site at <http://www.dstl.gov.uk>. From the home page, click on "Technology Transfer" and "Joint Grants Scheme".

### **Extensions**

- 24.** It is not NERC policy to financially supplement an existing research grant. An application for a funded extension to an existing or previous research grant must therefore be submitted as a new proposal and must demonstrate that the request is for funding a direct development of, but not a supplement to, the earlier work. Applications for extensions will be considered in competition with other applications for funding and should be, in themselves, discrete projects. The initial research grant to which the new work refers should be identified on the application form.
- 25.** Extensions to small grants are not permitted, although the results of a small grant may lead to an application for further funding through a standard or other grant. Small research grants are awarded for defined programmes of research, and are not intended to extend the period of employment of a research assistant once a standard research grant has ended.
- 26.** NERC may, in exceptional cases, permit a short-term no cost extension to an award. This may occur only where unforeseen circumstances have severely affected the progress of the work (e.g. loss of key staff or external factors leading to the rescheduling of fieldwork/ship time), and is not intended to allow the pursuit of new avenues of enquiry. A research grant may also be extended to cover periods of maternity, adoption or sick leave exceeding three months for staff within the Directly Incurred and Exceptions fund headings (excluding Investigators, unless they are also Research Fellows or Research Assistants funded by the grant). Such requests should be sought from NERC by submitting a completed "Requests for Time-Only Extensions" pro-forma (GE1) detailing the reasons for, and duration of, the request, to the relevant Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Teamleader (see Annexe A). The extension form is available on the NERC website at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms/>.

## Urgency Applications

- 27.** Exceptionally, a research grant application may be submitted at any time for rapid consideration under an urgency procedure. This is permitted only in cases where the application has been prompted by an unexpected and transient scientific opportunity (e.g. earthquake, drought, temporary exposure or short-timescale event in an ecosystem) and where conforming to the timetable for the normal consideration of grant applications would result in the opportunity being missed. Time-limited logistical events, such as an unforeseen opportunity to participate in a particular experimental or observational programme or the availability of staff or facilities, will not be accepted as grounds for urgency.
- 28.** Prospective applicants **must** first contact the appropriate Science Programmes Officer (see Annexe A) before submitting a proposal for consideration under the urgency procedure.

## KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

- 29.** NERC seeks to increase the transfer of knowledge gained in research to both public and private sector users.

## Partnership Research Grants

- 30.** Partnership Research Grants aim to facilitate and promote joint research activities between academic researchers and partners in public or private sector organisations. Project Partners must be able to provide co-funding in cash or in kind (or both) equal to the total funds (at 100% FEC) sought from NERC. All other terms and conditions will be as for Standard Grants.
- 31.** This scheme replaces the Connect B scheme and is implemented through a LINK franchise. Full details and guidance notes are available on the NERC website at: [www.nerc.ac.uk/using/partnershiprg.shtml](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/partnershiprg.shtml).
- 32.** Applications are managed through the NERC Standard Grant assessment mechanism with closing dates on 1 December and 1 July each year (see Section F for details of application and assessment procedures).

## Knowledge Transfer Annual Call

- 33.** NERC has launched an annual call to support a variety of knowledge transfer opportunities to maximise the transfer of public funded environmental science between the UK's science base and the users of environmental science. Full details about current calls and awards are available on the NERC website at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/knowledge.shtml>. Two types of funding are available:

## Networks

- 34.** Knowledge Transfer Networks create new communities, bringing together NERC scientific expertise with users of NERC science. Networks encourage the transfer of ideas, experimental techniques, technological and scientific insights. There may also be significant opportunities for the development of new collaborative research improving science to industry and science to policy outputs. Networks should involve representatives from academia and public and/or private sectors.

## Good Ideas

- 35.** Through this scheme NERC seeks to attract applications for a wide range of activities falling broadly within, but not limited, to the following three areas:
- Co-operation in education and training;
  - People and knowledge flow;



- New collaborations with users.

36. NERC will consider more novel applications of knowledge transfer, providing they do not involve commercialisation activities or publication of scientific papers that would otherwise be supported through existing research grants.

#### **Connect A**

37. This scheme is aimed at promoting partnerships between eligible researchers (under rules for Blue Skies, see Section C) and potential users of NERC funded research. The scheme is intended for pump priming activities of two basic types: 'Proof of concept' proposals for a specific research activity relating to emerging ideas from the science base that have potential application but a high degree of technical risk and costs for workshops or seminars on a theme of joint interest to the collaborating body and the science base. Participants should be from both communities. The maximum funding that may be sought is £4,000 for the total Directly Incurred costs (i.e. the limit applies to 100% of costs under this heading). In addition NERC will pay the appropriate proportion (i.e. 80%) of Directly Allocated and Indirect Costs (see Section D for details of cost categories).
38. There are no closing dates for CONNECT A applications. Applications should be submitted on the Connect A application form available from the NERC website and **NOT** through the Je-S system.

#### **Follow on Fund**

39. The fund aims to increase the level and accelerate the rate of commercialisation of research ideas arising from the NERC research community by providing funds to enable these ideas to be brought to a stage where commercial opportunities (e.g. licensing, seed or equity funds) can be secured. The Follow on Fund is run in conjunction with BBSRC, EPSRC and PPARC. There are two closing dates for applications each year – posted on the website at: [www.nerc.ac.uk/using/fofund.shtml](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/fofund.shtml).
40. The fund is open to researchers in UK Universities and Research Council institutes with current or recently finished research funding. Eligibility is as for Blue Skies (see Section C). Activities supported will mainly comprise further scientific and technical development of an idea, though applications may involve some activities towards improving an intellectual property position, market research or investigation of potential licensees and joint ventures. Grants are awarded for twelve months, for a maximum of £110,000. This limit applies to the total (100%) fEC of the project, of which the Councils will fund the standard proportion (i.e. 80%).
41. Applications are made using the specially designed form available on the web pages [www.nerc.ac.uk/using/fofund.shtml](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/fofund.shtml) (**NOT** through the Je-S system). Guidance notes and frequently asked questions are also available to download.

#### **Tied Studentships**

42. An application for a Standard, Consortium or Partnership Research grant may include a request for funding for one or more 'tied' research students. Eligibility requirements for tied students are the same as for other NERC studentships. Further details can be found in the Studentships Handbook on the NERC website at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms/>.
43. A tied studentship should constitute a distinct project, providing added value to the research grant. The main research grant project should still be viable without the studentship and should have distinct objectives that are not reliant upon the studentship. The student is expected to be able to develop novel research ideas whilst benefiting from working in a group environment. NERC does not expect the student to be the only dedicated researcher on a grant (excluding investigators).

#### **DIRECTED RESEARCH PROGRAMMES**

44. Directed research awards are generally made under the same terms and conditions as Blue Skies research grants, but with extended institutional eligibility (see Section C). Directed research programmes are widely advertised in the scientific press and on the NERC website. The announcement of opportunity for each programme will give details of the funding available, closing

dates and contact details for further information. The appropriate Science Programmes Officer will be able to provide advice on the specific terms and conditions that apply to that programme.

## Section C - ELIGIBILITY

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### Principal Investigator

45. The Principal Investigator on the application must, at the time of application, be resident in the UK and be employed by an eligible UK Research Organisation (Higher Education Institution, NERC Research or Collaborative Centre) or a recognised academic analogue (see below and Annexe E). Employment should be at lecturer (or equivalent) level or above or, for NERC and BBSRC Research Organisations, as a researcher at Band 5 level or above.
46. Holders of research fellowships from the Research Councils, the Wellcome Trust or Royal Society, and holders of competitively awarded university fellowships with a status equating to that of at least lecturer level, may also apply. However, the fellowship must have been secured in open competition and, if externally awarded, must be tenable at any NERC eligible Research Organisation.
47. All Principal Investigators must have a contract of employment that extends beyond the period of the proposed research grant. Exceptionally, NERC fellows whose award does not extend beyond the proposed end date of the grant may apply as a Principal Investigator provided the application is submitted jointly with at least one eligible Co-Investigator from the same department. The host Research Organisation must provide the same support for fixed term employees as is normal for a permanent employee.
48. The following are not eligible to apply as Principal Investigators: research assistants, technicians, other researchers who are employed on short-term projects or Research Council grants, holders of fellowships that were not awarded following open competition and are not portable.
49. Subject to NERC's prior approval, holders of certain senior non-stipendiary posts (e.g. Visiting Professor, Professor Emeritus etc.) and scientists who have retired recently from the academic staff of an eligible Research Organisation may be eligible to apply for funding as a Principal Investigator.
50. Where the Principal or Co-Investigator is retired (or will retire before the end of the grant), or holds a senior non-stipendiary post, the expectation is that their involvement in a project would be covered by a contract with the Research Organisation. (The cost of their time attributed to the project is likely to be a Directly Incurred cost).
51. Recipients of Research Council Academic Fellowships who are initially supported as Post Doctoral Research Assistants (PDRA) on research grants are eligible to apply for new research grants in their own right. However, they cannot start any successful award until they have completed their PDRA duties on the original research grant.
52. NERC will not accept applications from a Principal Investigator who has been sanctioned for not completing NERC's required output and performance measures on previous grants, not completing final reports on previous grants or submitting a report that was graded as unsatisfactory (see also Section G).

### New Investigator

53. An applicant for the New Investigators' scheme must be eligible to apply as a Principal Investigator, but in addition, eligibility is restricted to those Investigators at the outset of their independent scientific career. Applicants must therefore be within three years of first becoming eligible for NERC funding as a Principal Investigator (account will be taken of any career breaks) and must not have previously received research funding as a Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator (other than as a Researcher Co-Investigator) from NERC or any other funding body in the UK or overseas. This scheme is not intended to support those whose independent research career is already

established, so those in senior positions are not eligible to apply.

- 54.** Applicants for New Investigator grants must be the sole Investigator; there should be no Co-Investigators or Researcher Co-Investigators. New Investigators are also free to apply to any of the other NERC grants schemes, but in these they will be assessed in open competition with all other applicants.

#### **Co-Investigator**

- 55.** Co-Investigators are normally expected to meet the eligibility criteria for a Principal Investigator and should be able to take over from the Principal Investigator if required.
- 56.** Spilt Standard and Consortium Grants must have at least one Investigator (not Researcher Co-Investigator) at each of the Research Organisations involved.

#### **Researcher Co-Investigator**

- 57.** A Post Doctoral Research Assistant (PDRA) who is not eligible to be a Principal or Co-Investigator, but has made a substantial contribution to the formulation and development of the application and will be closely involved with the project (If funded) may be identified as a 'Researcher Co-Investigator'.
- 58.** A Researcher Co-Investigator must:
- Be the named researcher on the project and seek his/her salary as a Directly Incurred cost.
  - Be employed by the same Research Organisation as the either the Principal or one of the Co-Investigators.
  - If applying from a NERC or BBSRC Research Organisation be employed at Band 6 or higher.
- 59.** A Researcher Co-Investigator may not take over from the Principal Investigator.

#### **Project Partners**

- 60.** The Principal Investigator may also name up to four formal Project Partners, who will not receive funding directly from the award, but will have an integral role in the proposed research. Named Project Partners may include staff in overseas Research Organisations or from UK bodies (including the user community) that are not eligible to hold NERC grants. For Knowledge Transfer applications there is no limit to the number of Project Partners.
- 61.** Project Partners should ensure the availability of the necessary facilities and infrastructure before completing the form. It is the responsibility of named Project Partners to read and comply with the terms and conditions relating to applications for research grants.
- 62.** Non-academic (user) partners must provide detailed letters of support of up to 2 sides of A4. Letters of support should identify the relevance of the proposed work to the partners, the full nature of the collaboration and how the partners will be involved in the project. Partner contributions both in cash and in kind should be explained in detail in the case for support. Only letters from Project Partners named on the application form will be used in the Peer Review process.

#### **Eligible Research Organisations**

- 63.** Blue Skies and Knowledge Transfer research grants may be held at approved UK universities or colleges, NERC Research Centres, the Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils (CCLRC), BBSRC Institutes and at any of the recognised Academic Analogues listed in Annexe E.
- 64.** NERC and BBSRC have a reciprocal arrangement whereby researchers from BBSRC or NERC Research Organisations can apply to each other's Council for Blue Skies funding. Each Council applies a cap on the total value of grant applications that may be submitted of £2.7m in any one year.

- 65.** Directed and Consortium and grants may be held at any Research Organisation eligible to receive Blue Skies funding, at other Research Councils' Institutes, Scottish Agricultural and Biological Research Institutes (SABRIs), Government Research Establishments (GREs) and their agencies and not-for-profit research organisations.
- 66.** To apply to NERC, Research Organisations must also be registered as users of the Research Councils' Joint Electronic Submission system (full details of the system are available at: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/je-s>) and have had their costing methodology validated.

## Section D – GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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- 67.** These terms and conditions relate to grants costed and funded on the basis of full economic cost (fEC), calculated in accordance with the TRAC methodology (universities and other higher education bodies) or by an equivalent methodology by other Research Organisations.

### Definitions

- 68. Full Economic Cost (fEC):** a price which, if recovered across an organisation's full programme, would recover the total cost (direct, indirect and total overhead) including an adequate recurring investment in the organisation's infrastructure.
- 69. Directly Incurred Costs:** costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project, are charged as the cash value actually spent and are supported by an audit record.
- 70. Directly Allocated Costs:** the costs of resources used by a project that are shared by other activities. They are charged to projects on the basis of estimates rather than actual costs and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis.
- 71. Indirect Costs:** non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated Costs. They include the costs of the Research Organisation's administration such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services.
- 72. Exceptions:** Directly Incurred Costs that NERC will fund at 100% of fEC, subject to actual expenditure incurred, or items that are outside fEC.
- 73. Dipstick Testing:** a programme of visits and office-based tests to seek assurance that research grant funds are used for the purpose for which they are given and that grants are managed in accordance with the terms and conditions under which they are awarded.
- 74. Principal Investigator:** the person to whom the research project is assigned. The Principal Investigator takes responsibility for the intellectual leadership of the research project and for the overall management of the research.
- 75. Co-Investigator:** a person who assists the Principal Investigator in the management and leadership of a project.
- 76. Research Grant:** a contribution to the costs of a stated research project which has been assessed as suitable for funding through the procedures established by NERC. Research Grants provide a proportion of the full economic costs of a project.
- 77. Research Organisation:** the organisation to which the research grant is awarded and which takes responsibility for the management of the research project and the accountability of funds provided.
- 78. Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC):** an agreed methodology used by universities and other higher education bodies for calculating full economic costs.

### Confidentiality

- 79.** Research grant applications are provided to NERC in confidence. NERC will not use the information contained in the application (or any further information provided later in support of the application) for any purpose except the purpose of reviewing the grant application and monitoring it, if it is funded. NERC may disclose the application to its employees, external reviewers and, possibly other funding bodies for the purpose of assisting it in deciding whether or not the application should be funded. NERC will not otherwise disclose the information unless:
- it is required to do so under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), or any other law or regulation to which NERC is or may become subject to; or

- it is funded, in which case certain details (see below) will be entered onto the NERC website and other publicly available databases.

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations**

- 80.** NERC is a public authority for the purposes of FOIA and is subject to its terms. This means that it has a duty to respond to requests for information from the public and to provide certain information on request unless that information falls within certain exemptions that are specified in the Act. One of these exemptions applies to information that has been provided in confidence and which remains confidential and another is that the information requested is a trade secret or that its release would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person.
- 81.** If NERC receives a request under FOIA that includes release of information contained in a research grant application, NERC will make every effort to consult with the Principal Investigator before releasing that information to help it to decide whether or not one of the exemptions applies. However, NERC has a duty to comply with FOIA and will have to disclose the information requested unless a relevant exemption applies. If a Research Organisation considers that any information that it provides to NERC would be subject to an exemption under FOIA or the EIRs it should clearly mark the information as such and provide an explanation of why it considers the exemption applies and for how long. NERC will consider this explanation before disclosure, but it is not obliged to accept it as binding.
- 82.** Where NERC determines that a Research Organisation is holding information on its behalf that it requires in order to comply with its obligations under FOIA or EIRs, the Research Organisation undertakes to provide access to such information as soon as reasonably practicable on request of NERC and in any event within five working days.
- 83.** In some cases Research Organisations may be directly responsible for complying with FOIA and the EIRs. In such cases NERC accepts no responsibility for any failure to comply by the Research Organisations.
- 84.** Details of funded grants will be made available on the NERC website and other publicly available databases and in reports and/or paper documents. The following information will routinely be made available:
  - Name of host Research Organisation;
  - Details of applicants (title, forenames, initials, surname, department);
  - Project title;
  - Technical and non-technical summaries of the research;
  - Duration of the project; and
  - Funding provided by NERC.

## **Data Protection Act 1998**

- 85.** NERC will use the personal information provided on the application form for the purpose of processing grant applications and monitoring any grant that is awarded (including both scientific and financial monitoring). This includes:
  - Registration of applications;
  - Operation of NERC grants processing and management information systems;
  - The acquisition of College and external referees comments;
  - The preparation of material for use by peer review/funding panels;

- Statistical analysis to inform the evaluation of the quality of the research undertaken and to study demographic trends;
- Policy and strategy studies;
- Monitoring the progress of the research against agreed targets and milestones;
- Monitoring the spend of funds awarded; and
- Training purposes.

- 86.** Applicants should be aware that, for the purpose of peer review, information may be sent to external experts in countries outside the European Union, including countries that do not have any data protection laws. By submitting an application to NERC, Investigators are agreeing that they consent to the transfer of personal information in this way.
- 87.** Applicants must ensure that they have obtained the permission of any other person named on the application form (for example any Co-Investigators or Project Partners) for the provision of their personal information to NERC and the processing of their data by NERC for the purposes set out above.

### **Responsibilities of the Research Organisation**

- 88.** The Research Organisation must ensure that any part of the Full Economic Cost of the project not funded by the NERC grant is committed to the project before it starts.
- 89.** The Research Organisation must ensure that Principal and Co-Investigators are made aware of their responsibilities and that they observe the terms and conditions of research grants.
- 90.** The Research Organisation must ensure that the research supported by the grant complies with all relevant legislation and Government regulation, including that introduced while work is in progress. This requirement includes approval or licence from any regulatory body that may be required before the research can commence.
- 91.** The Research Organisation is expected to adopt the principles, standards and best practice for the management of research staff set out in the 1996 Concordat for the Career Management of Contract Research Staff, and subsequent amendments. The Concordat can be found on the Universities UK website at <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/activities/rci.asp>. Research staff should be appointed on terms that are no less favourable than those of comparable posts in the Research Organisation.
- 92.** The Research Organisation must notify NERC of any change in its status, or that of any of the Investigators, that might affect their eligibility to hold a research grant.
- 93.** The Research Organisation must ensure proper financial management of research grants and accountability for the use of public funds.
- 94.** Applications for NERC research grants are only accepted from eligible Investigators, and grants may be held only at eligible Research Organisations. The eligibility criteria set out in this booklet (Section C) must be met in full on the closing date for the round in which the application will be considered. Any application that does not meet the eligibility criteria will be rejected and the final decision on the eligibility of an application rests with NERC. Where an application is judged to be ineligible, NERC will inform the Principal Investigator within 30 working days of receiving the application and will give full details of the reason for the decision. Prospective Principal Investigators are strongly advised to consult NERC before submitting an application if any aspect of the eligibility of the Investigator(s) or Research Organisation is open to doubt.
- 95.** Where a project will be carried out by more than one Investigator, the application should be submitted jointly in the name of the Principal Investigator and the Co-Investigator(s). The Principal Investigator will take the lead in conducting the research and will be responsible for ensuring that

the terms and conditions for the grant are met (for example, the Principal Investigator is responsible for providing the final report).

96. The Principal Investigator must request NERC's prior approval for any significant changes to the work carried out under the grant or to the staff or resources used. Specific requirements are outlined in the following sections, but Principal Investigators should consult NERC in any other instances where the research programme is likely to differ substantially from that for which funding was originally awarded.
97. NERC reserves the right to terminate an award at any time if the conduct of the award-holder(s) in carrying out the research is found to be unsatisfactory or contravenes the conditions under which the award was made.

#### **Split Standard and Consortium Grants**

98. The Principal Investigator's Research Organisation will normally be the administering Research Organisation, but NERC will allow a Standard Grant or a Partnership Research Grant to be split between a maximum of four Research Organisations for financial purposes. There is a minimum limit of three eligible Research Organisations requesting direct funding on Consortium grants, but no upper limit. Small grants may not be split in this way.
99. The minimum sum that can be awarded to an individual Research Organisation is £10,000 (100% FEC). Each component organisation must submit separate applications through the Je-S system. There will be one Principal Investigator and lead Research Organisation with responsibility for the management of the overall project. There must be at least one Investigator who is not a Researcher Co-Investigator at each of the organisations involved.

#### **Research Governance**

100. It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure that the research is organised and undertaken within a framework of best practice that recognises the various factors that may influence or impact on a research project. Particular requirements are to ensure that all necessary permissions are obtained before the research begins, and that there is clarity of role and responsibility among the research team and with any collaborators. NERC expects research to be conducted in accordance with the highest standards of scientific integrity and research methodology.

#### **Permission for Research, the Use of Animals and Research Ethics**

101. The Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that ethical issues relating to the research project are identified and brought to the attention of the relevant approval or regulatory body. Approval to undertake the research must be granted before any work requiring approval begins. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants, the use of tissue or data in research, the use of animals, research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.
102. NERC adopted an ethics policy in June 2005. This sets out guiding principles that provide the ethical framework that we aspire to in all aspects of our work. We expect those who receive funding from us to respect the policy. A paper copy of the policy will be made available to Principal and Co-Investigators with the award letter. The policy and additional information can be found on the website at [www.nerc.ac.uk/aboutus/ethics](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/aboutus/ethics).
103. Applicants who intend to undertake research work on private or Government property should consult the owner or organisation responsible, (e.g. the Forestry Authority or the Ministry of Defence), before submitting an application to NERC. Similarly, applicants intending to undertake fieldwork overseas must ensure that they have the necessary documentation and permissions.
104. The Investigator(s) and Research Organisation(s) must ensure that all research work funded through a NERC research grant complies with all relevant Government regulations. NERC will not be liable



if an award-holder is found to be in breach of such regulations. When damage to the environment arising from a piece of research has been justified, Investigators are expected to minimise the extent and degree of harm consistent with achieving valid results and to ensure that the harm done is repaired as far as possible. NERC reserves the right to inspect and/or audit for compliance with health and safety regulations for any work areas covered by awards. Audit would be conducted against the Research Organisation's safety management systems.

- 105.** Wherever possible, researchers must adopt procedures and techniques that avoid the use of animals. Where this is not possible, the research should be designed so that:
- The least sentient species with the appropriate physiology is used;
  - The number of animals used is the minimum sufficient to provide adequate statistical power to answer the question posed; and
  - The severity of procedures performed on animals is kept to a minimum. Experiments should be kept as short as possible. Appropriate anaesthesia, analgesia and humane end points should be used to minimise any pain and suffering.
- 106.** All general and local regulations about the use of experimental animals must be observed. The provisions of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, and any amendments, must be observed and all necessary licences must have been received before any work requiring approval can commence. Responsibility for obtaining a Home Office licence lies with Investigators and host Research Organisations. Applicants and award-holders should be aware of the joint statement by the Director General of the Research Councils and the Chief Executives of the Research Councils on "Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice". The statement is available on the OST website at: <http://www.ost.gov.uk/research/councils/safe.htm>.
- 107.** There are no formal restrictions or embargoes on countries that have not signed the treaties on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, biological and chemical weapons). However, a voluntary vetting scheme operates through the Ministry of Defence, covering researchers in relevant scientific areas from a number of countries of concern. Participation in the VVS is the responsibility of the Research Organisation.

## **Health and Safety**

- 108.** The Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that a safe working environment is provided for all individuals associated with a research project. Its approach and policy on health and safety matters must meet all regulatory and legislative requirements and be consistent with best practice recommended by the Health & Safety Executive. Appropriate care must be taken where researchers are working off-site. The Research Organisation must satisfy itself that all reasonable health and safety factors are addressed. NERC reserves the right to require the Research Organisation to undertake a safety risk assessment in individual cases where health and safety is an issue, and to monitor and audit the actual arrangements made.
- 109.** For the purposes of safety and employment legislation, the Research Organisation is the employer of all staff engaged on projects funded by NERC research grants; for practical purposes this includes students. The Research Organisation therefore has statutory responsibility under health and safety legislation for anyone appointed under any grant supported by NERC. NERC accepts its residual duty of care for students and will discharge this duty. However, NERC does not accept liability for staff, including students, engaged in such research and will not indemnify a Research Organisation against any claims for which it may become liable as employer and/or occupier of premises (e.g. for damages or personal injury). Similarly NERC will not be liable under any circumstances for any claim for unfair dismissal or redundancy payments arising out of the appointment to a post funded from a NERC grant

## **Misconduct and Conflicts of Interest**

- 110.** The Research Organisation is required to have in place procedures for governing good research practice that meet the requirements of the Research Councils' guidance on good practice. The Research Organisation must ensure that there are reliable systems and processes in place for the

prevention of research misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, falsification of data), together with well defined and clearly publicised arrangements for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct. Where an allegation of misconduct arises in respect of a researcher supported by a research grant, NERC must be informed immediately and notified of the outcome of any investigation.

### **Announcement of Award**

- 111.** When an award is to be made, a formal offer will be made to the Research Organisation containing details of the funding available and the main Terms and Conditions of NERC research grants. These terms and conditions are common to all Research Councils (see Annexe F). The announcement will be accompanied by a starting certificate and a schedule of payments.
- 112.** Where the funding offered is significantly lower than that requested, the Principal Investigator may be invited to revise the scope of the proposal in line with the Moderating Panel /Steering Committee's recommendations. If the Principal Investigator is unable to do this to NERC's satisfaction, or is not prepared to accept the reduced award, the offer will be withdrawn.
- 113.** Where staff resources have been revised following peer review, the Research Organisation will be asked to provide revised figures for estates and indirect costs. The Research Organisation should provide these revised figures within ten working days. Where Research Organisations fail to comply with this request, NERC will revise the estates and indirect costs on a *pro rata* basis.

### **Starting Procedures**

- 114.** The award letter will show the proposed start and end dates of the award. The actual start date may be postponed by up to six months from the start date shown in the award letter, the duration of the grant remaining unchanged. NERC reserves the right to withdraw the award in full if the starting certificate is not received within **42** days of the actual start date.
- 115.** Exceptionally, the start date may be delayed by more than six months (for example due to sea-time scheduling issues). Permission must be sought from NERC in advance by submitting a completed "Requests for Time-Only Extensions" pro-forma (GE1) detailing the reasons for, and duration of, the request to the relevant Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Teamleader (see Annexe A). The extension form is available on the NERC website: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms/>.
- 116.** Where there are staff funded by the grant who were intended to be appointed from the start date, payments will take effect from the date when the first such staff start work. Otherwise, payments will take effect from the start date given on the starting certificate.
- 117.** Expenditure may be incurred prior to the start of research and subsequently charged to the grant, provided that it does not precede the date of the award letter.
- 118.** When a tied studentship has been awarded, the student's supervisor must submit a Research Studentship Nomination form (RSN), available from the NERC website at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms/>, providing details of the student. The eligibility of a nominated student cannot be assumed until the student has been accepted by NERC and has received a formal offer of funding.

### **Changes in Investigators/Transfer of a Grant**

- 119.** NERC research grants support research in which the Principal and any Co-Investigators are engaged personally, and awards are made to the Research Organisation(s) at which the work is to be undertaken. NERC must be notified immediately if an Investigator resigns, retires, is made redundant, or transfers to another Research Organisation.
- 120.** If an Investigator retires or resigns and does not take up another post at a Research Organisation eligible to receive research grants, support for the research project will be reviewed. The Research Organisation may nominate a replacement Principal Investigator. NERC will wish to be assured that the replacement meets the eligibility criteria for Principal Investigators and has the expertise

and experience to lead the project to a successful conclusion, in accordance with its research objectives. NERC reserves the right to terminate the award.

- 121.** The Research Organisation must notify NERC if the Principal Investigator intends to transfer to another organisation. If this organisation is eligible to hold research grants, and is able to provide a suitable environment to enable the project to be successfully completed, the expectation is that the grant would be transferred with the investigator. Written agreement to this is required from both the relinquishing and receiving organisations. A Request for Transfer of a NERC Grant form (RTRG) available from the NERC website, must be completed and returned to the Research Grants Team (see Annexe A).
- 122.** NERC will wish to be assured that satisfactory arrangements have been agreed that will enable the project to be undertaken, or to continue, in accordance with its objectives. If suitable arrangements cannot be agreed, NERC will consider withdrawing its support or terminating the grant.
- 123.** Where there is a basis for continuing involvement by the relinquishing organisation, agreement should be reached between both organisations on the apportionment of work and the distribution of related funding.
- 124.** Research Grants will not be re-costed following transfer. The unspent balance of Directly Incurred and Exceptions funds, together with a pro rata share of Directly Allocated and Indirect costs, will be transferred to the new Research Organisation. The receiving organisation will be required to confirm, by return of a starting certificate, that it will provide any balance of resources needed to complete the project.

#### **Publication of Work/Open Source Software (OSS)**

- 125.** All NERC award-holders are expected to publish the results of their research in appropriate journals. They are, however, invited to consult NERC if other arrangements seem desirable. All published papers must acknowledge any support received from NERC and cite the award reference number(s). See also Section L.
- 126.** NERC funded projects that aim to produce software outputs must specify a proposed software exploitation route at the start of the project. At the completion of a project, the software must be exploited either commercially, within an academic community or as OSS.

#### **Public Engagement**

- 127.** NERC expects award-holders to communicate their science to local and national audiences, and to raise awareness of how science affects issues of public interest. This is encouraged for several reasons: the public ultimately pays for the research, it is in the interest of the scientist to foster interest in and understanding of science, and communicating science to the public is a commitment set out in the NERC Charter. Applicants should outline their ideas and/or specific proposals for meeting this aspect of the NERC mission within the case for support. If costs are known in advance, they should be listed under the Directly Incurred cost heading. If they are not known, Principal Investigators may, where savings elsewhere on the grant permit, use funds for public engagement activities. This expenditure should also be shown under the Directly Incurred cost heading on the Final Expenditure Statement (see Section H for further details). The NERC Communications Team (tel: 01793 411623, email: [requests@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:requests@nerc.ac.uk)) can provide help and advice in this area.

#### **Knowledge Transfer**

- 128.** Using NERC science for the benefit of the UK forms part of the NERC mission. NERC science has the potential to underpin the development of sustainable solutions to environmental problems. It informs policy development and can lead to new and improved processes, services and products. NERC has a knowledge transfer policy and outline strategy (published on the website at: [www.nerc.ac.uk/using/knowledge.shtml](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/knowledge.shtml)) that guide our activities. The strategy aims to maximise the transfer of all forms of knowledge arising from NERC funded science to its users. It also promotes entrepreneurship and commercialisation of NERC science.

- 129.** NERC recognises that knowledge transfer can occur by various routes and actively supports partnership and other schemes that enable knowledge transfer through these routes. Recipients of NERC funding must try to ensure that the outcomes of research investment are used to the benefit of the UK and the international community. (For further information on commercialisation and Intellectual Property see Section J).

#### **Data Availability**

- 130.** NERC believes that datasets collected as a result of projects are an important resource that must be adequately managed. Investigators should therefore make sure that a NERC Designated Centre (see Section L) is aware of any significant datasets to be compiled as a result of their projects, so that the long-term future of these data can be planned. At the end of an award Investigators are required to offer the appropriate Data Centre a copy of any dataset generated, so that the data can be made available for other researchers. The Intellectual Property Rights to the data need not be transferred.
- 131.** NERC reserves the right to access all unpublished papers, records, data or collections resulting from the work carried out under a grant, some of which may be required to be deposited with NERC. Similarly NERC reserves the right to use information on the outcome of awards to report on achievements e.g. in annual reports. NERC may, at any time, require detailed information on the results of work funded through grants for use in scientific or financial audits.
- 132.** NERC Data Centres (see Section L) will give advice on issues relating to copyright, licensing and exploitation of datasets. NERC policy in this area is described in more detail in the NERC Data Policy Handbook, available from NERC's Data Management Co-ordinator Mark Thorley, email: [mrt@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:mrt@nerc.ac.uk) tel: (01223) 221594, or see <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/data/policy.shtml>.

#### **Staff Funded From Research Grants**

- 133.** The Research Organisation must assume full responsibility for staff funded from the grant and, in consequence, accept all duties owed to and responsibilities for these staff, including, without limitation, their terms and conditions of employment and their training and supervision, arising from the employer/employee relationship.
- 134.** The Research Organisation must provide research staff with a statement, at the outset of their employment, setting out the provisions for career management and development, including personal skills training, and ensure that they have access to appropriate training opportunities.
- 135.** Research staff may undertake teaching and demonstrating work for up to 6 hours a week (pro rata for part-time staff) during normal working hours provided that this work is related to the research project to which they were appointed. NERC should be consulted about adjustments to salaries of staff required to undertake teaching or demonstrating work, or part-time employment on work not funded through the research grant
- 136.** There is no barrier to the recruitment of scientific staff from overseas, provided that they have permission to work in the United Kingdom. The Research Organisation is solely responsible for the procurement of work permits.
- 137.** All appointments may be full or part-time as appropriate. Staff funded through a NERC research grant must be appointed on the same terms and conditions as staff in equivalent posts in the Research Organisation, and NERC's prior approval must be sought before an appointment is made on any other conditions.
- 138.** NERC will provide funding for salaries for University staff on the basis of spine points on the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education (JNCHES) salary scales. An element for future pay awards will be added to awards by NERC. This will be based on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflators issued by the Treasury.
- 139.** The grant will include funding for the basic salary, National Insurance and superannuation costs for staff to be supported by the award. Where individuals opt for a personal pension plan (in place of

their employer's scheme), NERC will normally meet the cost of this, provided the cost does not exceed the USS/JSS contribution.

- 140.** Research Assistants, whether named or unnamed, should be requested at a salary level commensurate with the skills, responsibilities, expertise and experience necessary to carry out the proposed research activity. This level must be fully justified in the case for support.
- 141.** Funds for technicians and other support staff who will be dedicated to the research project, or who will undertake work directly related to the proposed project and whose time can be fully supported by an auditable record (e.g. timesheets) during the life of the project, may be sought as directly incurred costs. The need for these staff must be fully justified in the case for support.
- 142.** Funds for technicians and other support staff who will undertake work directly related to the proposed project, but whose time will be shared with other projects or activities and will not be supported by an auditable record, should be claimed as Other Directly Allocated Costs (in Je-S, select 'Project Specific Staff Costs' from the drop down menu). The need for these staff must be fully justified in the case for support.
- 143.** Funds for technicians and other support staff who are part of a 'staff pool' supporting a range of projects or activities should also be included as Other Directly Allocated Costs (in Je-S select 'General Technical Services' from the drop down menu), as long as they are not included in an Organisation's Estates Costs. These do not need to be justified.

#### **Sick, Maternity, Adoption and Paternity Pay and Leave**

- 144.** Grant funds may be used for paid maternity, adoption or paternity leave for tied students and for staff within the Directly Incurred fund heading (excluding the Principal and Co-Investigators, unless they are also Research Fellows or Research Assistants funded by the grant), if staff fulfil the qualifying conditions of the Research Organisation. Funding may be sought by the Research Organisation at the end of a grant to cover the additional costs of either a substitute appointment or an extension of the grant. The salary of any substitute appointment must not exceed that of the individual on leave.
- 145.** Grant funds may be used to provide paid maternity, adoption and paternity leave only to the extent that it is taken during the original period of the grant. The Research Organisation will be responsible for any liability for maternity and paternity pay for staff supported by the research grant outside the original period of the grant. If, for example, a research grant ends while a member of research staff is part-way through her maternity leave, the Research Organisation will be responsible for that part of the maternity leave which is taken after the research grant has ended.
- 146.** Grant funds may be used for paid sick leave for tied students and staff within the Directly Incurred fund heading (excluding the Principal and Co-Investigators, unless they are also Research Fellows or Research Assistants funded by the grant) who fulfil the qualifying conditions of the Research Organisation. Where there is a continuous period of sick leave in excess of 3 months, the Research Organisation may apply to the Research Council to discuss the possibility of a substitute appointment to safeguard progress on the project, or an extension to the duration of the project, if the period of leave can be predicted.
- 147.** For the purposes of the provisions of maternity, adoption, paternity and sick leave, the Research Organisation will be compensated at the end of the grant for any resulting additional costs or time, falling within the original period of the grant. The duration of a grant will be extended only if the period can be accommodated within the maximum period allowed for extensions. Directly Allocated and Indirect funds will not be increased as a result of such extensions.



## Early Termination of Award

- 148.** NERC normally expects a project funded by a research grant to continue until the end of the period for which the award was made. However, NERC reserves the right to terminate the grant at any time before the end of the award. Where this becomes necessary, NERC will provide reasonable advance notice and will provide sufficient funding to cover any outstanding and unavoidable commitments.
- 149.** If a Research Organisation is unable to meet the conditions issued at the time of award, for whatever reason, then it may be required to relinquish the award. Similarly, an award may be relinquished voluntarily if the Principal Investigator encounters difficulties in carrying out any part of the research project.

## Tied Studentships

- 150.** A tied studentship should constitute a distinct project, providing added value to the research grant. The main research grant project should still be viable without the studentship and should have distinct objectives that are not reliant upon the studentship. The student is expected to be able to develop novel research ideas while benefiting from working in a group environment. NERC does not expect the studentship to be the only dedicated researcher on a grant (excluding investigators).
- 151.** A tied studentship provides funding for 36 months for a research student to carry out a well-defined programme of work within the research grant, leading to the award of a PhD/DPhil. The period of the studentship must fall entirely within the duration of the research grant. The tied studentship includes the student's maintenance grant, university and (for Oxford or Cambridge) college fees. These should not be requested on the application form, because they will be calculated automatically by NERC and paid at 100% through the NERC Postgraduate Support Section. No separate RTSG, short course attendance or conference allowances will be paid. However, additional costs may be requested on the main grant application form for items such as fieldwork expenses and consumables. These will be paid at the % FEC that applies to those cost headings. Tied students should not be included in the number of FTEs used in the calculation of a Research Organisation's Estates or Indirect costs. Investigators should not include supervision of tied students in their estimate of the number of hours they will spend on the research project.
- 152.** If there is a delay in nominating a student, then a no-cost extension to the research grant should be requested in order to ensure that the tied studentship falls entirely within the duration of the research grant.
- 153.** Funding is available for full-time studentships only, and awards cannot be made to part-fund studentships derived from other sources.
- 154.** Tied studentships must comply with the regulations governing other NERC research studentships, including those covering institutional and student eligibility and minimum qualifications. The Research Organisation must make the same level of provision for training and supervision that would be expected for any other NERC research student. Tied studentships cannot be held solely in Academic Analogues or NERC Centre/Surveys, since NERC studentships may be held only in degree-awarding bodies. A tied studentship may be held as a CASE award, if appropriate.
- 155.** The application for a tied studentship must be made with the grant application, although it is not necessary at that stage to name the prospective student. The application form (RS1a) is available on the NERC website at : <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms/>. Tied students cannot be funded through Small or New Investigators Grants.
- 156.** NERC will consider replacing a tied studentship in full in the event of the original student resigning within the first six months of the award. A request for a no-cost extension to the duration of the grant should be submitted if the replacement studentship would not be completed within the existing period of the award.
- 157.** NERC will not allow any unused studentship funds to be allocated to fund a PDRA or Technician or for any other purpose connected with the grant.

## Section E – FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

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- 158.** Subject to the following conditions, grant funds may be used, without reference to NERC, in such a manner as to best carry out the research. Research grant funds are cash limited and the grant is made on the understanding that its value will not be increased, except as stated in these terms and conditions. Research grant funds are provided for a specific research project. Under no circumstances may Directly Incurred and Exceptions funds be used to meet costs on any other project or activity.
- 159.** Any commitment incurred before a research grant is formally announced, or any commitment in excess of the amount awarded, is the responsibility of the Research Organisation.
- 160.** Applications should be at current price levels with no allowance for inflation. Awards will include funding for future pay awards and inflation based on the Treasury Gross Domestic Product (GDP) deflators. Costs awarded for equipment will not be inflated.
- 161.** NERC reserves the right to examine, in detail, all items of expenditure charged to an award, and in addition will visit selected Research Organisations as part of the cross-Council Dipstick Testing Initiative.
- 162.** A NERC research grant will fund 80% of the Full Economic Cost (fEC) of a programme of research, There are no ineligible costs but all costs associated with the research project must be itemised and fully justified in the case for support, with the following exceptions:
- Estates costs;
  - Indirect costs;
  - Investigators' salary costs (not time, which must be justified);
  - Some other Directly Allocated costs, e.g. general technical services.
- 163.** The main categories of costs which can be funded from a research grant are as follows:

### Directly Incurred Costs

- 164.** Directly Incurred costs are costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project, are charged as the cash value actually spent and are supported by an audit record. They can include:
- Staff: payroll costs for staff, full or part-time, who will work on the project and whose time can be supported by a full audit trail during the life of the project e.g. research assistants or dedicated technicians. Please note: Research Council Fellows (or others wholly funded by a sponsor external to the Research Organisation) cannot request their salary or associated Estates and Indirect costs.
  - Travel and subsistence: funds for travel and subsistence for use by staff, including any tied students who work on the project, where these are required by the nature of the work.
  - Equipment: the cost of individual items of equipment dedicated to the project and costing more than £3,000 (including VAT). This may include capital costs plus any maintenance and other related costs that are not included in the Research Organisation's estates costs, for example computers, laboratory/workshop equipment, installation costs and costs of essential modifications necessary to house equipment. Where equipment costs exceed £50,000 in total (including VAT), the amount above this figure will be paid in full and will automatically be entered under the 'Exceptions' heading (see 'Exceptions' below).
  - Other costs: costs of other items dedicated to the project including, for example, consumables, books, purchase/hire of vehicles and items of equipment costing less than £3,000.

## **Directly Allocated Costs**

- 165.** Directly Allocated costs are the costs of resources used by a project that are shared by other activities. They are charged to projects on the basis of estimates rather than actual costs and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis. They include:
- Investigators' salaries: includes only the salaries of Investigators whose time is charged to the grant on estimates rather than actual costs (where costs are actual and auditable, they are included under the Directly Incurred Staff heading); they may be actual or the average of a band (dependent upon the policy at the Research Organisation).
  - Estates Costs: these may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities and any clerical staff and equipment maintenance/operational costs not already included under other cost headings.
  - Other Directly Allocated Costs: these may include, for example, the costs of shared resources including: estimated costs of technicians or other support staff in academic departments; technicians and other support staff who are part of a 'staff pool' supporting a range of projects and activities (if not included in the Research Organisation's Estates Costs); or access to institutional research facilities and shared equipment.
- 166.** Estimating investigator time: investigators should include only the estimated salary costs for the time they will spend working directly on the grant. It is a requirement of the fEC costing methodology that for any one investigator, the maximum amount of time that Research Councils will fund across all the projects they support is 1650 hours a year (equivalent to 37.5 hours a week, 44 weeks a year). Salary costs must not include supervision time for postgraduate research students or time for writing publications after the end of the project. They may include the costs of a Principal Investigator's time for writing up the final report (although the duration of the grant should not be extended to include this), and Investigators' time for research, fieldwork, supervising other research staff, project management and interaction with project partners.

## **Indirect Costs**

- 167.** Indirect costs are non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates, which are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated costs. They include the costs of the Research Organisation's administration such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services.

## **Exceptions**

- 168.** These are Directly Incurred costs that NERC will fund at 100% of fEC, subject to actual expenditure incurred, or items that are outside fEC. These include tied studentships (whose stipend and tuition fees be paid, in full, independently of the research grant) and any equipment costs exceeding £50,000 (including VAT).

## **Details on Directly Incurred Costs**

### **Visiting Researchers**

- 169.** Distinguished researchers from the UK or overseas may be funded to visit the Investigator's institution in order to give full time advice and assistance on research in a particular field for up to 12 months during the project. Visiting Researchers will normally receive the same salary and conditions as other staff of an equivalent status within the Research Organisation. They must be engaged full-time on the project for the duration of the visit. Estates and Indirect costs will be paid where a visit exceeds 6 months.
- 170.** Reasonable expenses will be paid for travel to and from the UK by Visiting Researchers, but not their families. The amount requested for the visit should be reduced if a contribution has been received from other sources or if the visit will be partly funded by the Visiting Researcher's own institution. If the visit is part of a longer stay, NERC will only pay for the time dedicated to the research grant.



## **Travel and Subsistence**

- 171.** Funding will be provided for journeys, visits and fieldwork in the UK and overseas where these costs are approved at the outset of the grant. Each journey must be itemised, justified and fully costed in the grant application.
- 172.** Funding may be requested to enable staff on the grant to visit a recognised centre abroad to study new techniques and research developments where this would be of direct benefit to the research project.
- 173.** Risk assessment for safety and security should be carried out for travel overseas.
- 174.** Travel and subsistence rates for UK and overseas travel will normally be paid at the standard rate for the Institution.
- 175.** Requests for funding to attend conferences will be considered if the conference is directly relevant to the proposed research and if it can be shown that attendance will directly benefit the research. Each conference must be named and costed in the application.

## **Equipment**

- 176.** The procurement of equipment, consumables and services, including maintenance, must comply with all relevant national and EU legislation and the Research Organisation's own financial policy and procedures. Accepted procurement best practice in the higher education sector must be observed. The guidance issued by the Procurement Strategy Implementation Group (Proc-HE) on their website at [www.proc-he.ac.uk](http://www.proc-he.ac.uk), outlines the minimum requirement. For all equipment and services where the contract value is more than £25,000, excluding VAT, professionally qualified procurement staff must be consulted before the procurement process begins, and, where appropriate, at the market research stage, and must approve the order/contract before it is placed with a supplier.
- 177.** Applications for items of equipment costing more than £25,000 must include estimates of cost based on adequate functional specifications. All estimates must be explained. Telephone quotations may be regarded as the minimum justification for equipment up to £25,000, but additional documentary evidence must be provided for more expensive items, and must always be provided for equipment costing £100,000 or more.
- 178.** Equipment purchased from grant funds is primarily for use on the research project for which the research grant was awarded, and belongs to the Research Organisation. In certain circumstances NERC may wish to retain ownership throughout the period of the grant and possibly beyond. In such cases, the grant will be subject to an additional condition.
- 179.** NERC must be informed if, during the life of the research grant, the need for the equipment diminishes substantially or it is not used for the purpose for which it was funded. NERC reserves the right to determine the disposal of such equipment and to claim the proceeds of any sale.
- 180.** Any proposal to transfer ownership of the equipment during the period of the grant is subject to prior approval by NERC. After the research has ended, the Research Organisation is free to use the equipment without reference to NERC, but it is nevertheless expected to maintain it for research purposes as long as is practicable.
- 181.** Where there is spare capacity in the use of the equipment, NERC expects this to be made available to other users. Priority should be given to research supported by any of the Research Councils and to Research Council-funded students.
- 182.** The total fEC charged to a project for the use of equipment must not include any element of depreciation for equipment purchased from a Research Council grant.

- 183.** Essential maintenance of equipment under the Provision and Use of Workplace Regulations (PUWER) 1998, should be justified and costed in the grant application. The Research Organisation is responsible for the safety maintenance and safe operation of equipment purchased under a grant. The Research Organisation must insure and protect such equipment to the same extent as any other equipment it owns.
- 184.** When equipment is to be bought from overseas, advice on taxes and duties should be sought from HM Customs and Excise. NERC will not provide additional funding to cover fluctuations in exchange rates.
- 185.** Equipment requested in a research grant application may be available from one of the NERC equipment pools, and could be loaned to the Research Organisation for the duration of the award. If this is the case it will be made clear in the award letter. Pool equipment will be supplied fully serviced and in a condition safe to use; advice will be given on any maintenance required.

#### **Use of Services and Facilities**

- 186.** Applicants for NERC grants may also apply to NERC for access to any of the NERC-supported scientific services and facilities. For some of these facilities access is provided free to the user, subject to peer-review and prioritisation of applications to ensure that the highest quality science is supported. In other cases, the facilities are not operated by NERC and are funded on a *pay-as-you-go* basis. The NERC services and facilities are described in Section K. Applications for sea time and High Performance Computing must follow the procedures outlined in Section F.

#### **Casual Labour**

- 187.** Salary costs for any casual staff should be itemised as a Directly Incurred cost.

#### **Contaminated Land: Applications in Real Environments**

- 188.** Costs associated with the **Contaminated Land: Applications in Real Environments (CL:AIRE)** scheme should be listed as a Directly Incurred cost. Investigators must receive formal written approval from CL:AIRE before any application can be made to NERC, and copies of this approval must be included with the application. Further details can be found on the CL:AIRE website: [www.claire.co.uk](http://www.claire.co.uk).

#### **Access to NERC Data**

- 189.** NERC has extensive holdings of environmental data. It is NERC's policy to make its data available to *bona fide* researchers, either free of charge, or at rates intended to recoup only the costs of servicing the request. If proposals are to involve access to data held by NERC, Investigators should discuss their requirements in advanced with the appropriate Designated Data Centre (Section L), and identify any costs on the application form under the Directly Incurred cost heading.

#### **Research Grant Payment Details**

- 190.** Payments will normally be made to Research Organisations under the Research Councils' Profiled Payments procedures, as follows:
- Payments will normally be made on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the final month of the quarter, plus or minus 30 days.
  - A single payment will be made to the Research Organisation for all grants held. Details of the payment will be made available.
  - Payment for the purchase of equipment will normally be made in the initial year of the research grant. No allowances will be made for future inflation.
  - An Annual Statement will be provided after the end of each financial year summarising the payments made during the year. The Research Organisation and NERC must agree on the content

of the Annual Statement before regular quarterly payments can continue.

- The Research Organisation may be required to return a statement each year showing payments made by the Research Council during the previous financial year for all the research grants it holds. Where a statement is required, the Research Organisation must certify, by signing and returning the statement, that expenditure has been incurred in accordance with the grant conditions, and that those grants shown as current are continuing.
- No further payments will be made until the signed annual statement has been received and accepted by NERC.

## **Final Expenditure Statements**

- 191.** For each research grant the Research Organisation must submit a Final Statement of Expenditure no later than three months after the end of the award. The final payment of an award will not be released until the Final Expenditure Statement is received. The Principal Investigator must also submit a Final Report (see Section G), not later than three months after the end of the overall grant.
- 192.** Once a Final Statement of Expenditure statement has been received and the expenditure incurred has been reconciled against payments made, it will be considered as final.
- 193.** Expenditure shown in the Directly Incurred and Exceptions headings must show the actual expenditure incurred by the project. Settlement by NERC will be the proportion of fEC stated in the award letter applied to actual expenditure, within the cash limit.
- 194.** For the Directly Allocated and Indirect Costs headings, NERC will pay the amount shown as spent, within the cash limit, provided that the grant ran its full course. Where a grant is terminated more than 6 months before the planned end date, a pro rata share will be paid. Where a grant terminates within 6 months of the planned end date, Estates and Indirect Costs will be paid in full, but Investigators' costs and Other Directly Allocated Costs will be paid pro rata.
- 195.** Costs arising from maternity, paternity, adoption or sick leave should be identified in the Absence heading of the statement.
- 196.** NERC reserves the right to require the Research Organisation to complete and submit a statement of expenditure at any time during the course of a research grant, or to provide supplementary information in support of an interim or Final Expenditure Statement.
- 197.** If the Final Expenditure Statement is not submitted within three months of the end of the award (and prior written agreement to a postponement has not been given by NERC), NERC will recover 20% of the value of the award. For split Standard and Consortium grants, failure to submit the Final Expenditure Statement for any component grant within the prescribed three month deadline will result in recovery of 20% of the value of that component grant from the component Research Organisation.
- 198.** The final payment to the lead Research Organisation on a split Standard or Consortium grant will not be released until both the Final Expenditure Statement and the Final Report (see Section G) have been received. NERC will recover 20% of the value of the grant at the lead Research Organisation if either the Final Report or Final Expenditure Statement is not received within three months of the termination of the overall research grant.
- 199.** If either the Final Expenditure Statement or Final report has not been received within six months after the end of the award, NERC will recover the entire value of the award. For split Standard and Consortium grants, NERC will recover the entire value of the award held at the lead Research Organisation if either the Final Statement of Expenditure for the lead Research Organisation or Final Report has not been received within six months after the end of the overall grant (except where NERC has given prior agreement to a postponement).

### **Transfer of Funds between Headings (Virement)**

- 200.** Transfers of funds between fund headings are permitted only within and between Directly Incurred costs and Exceptions (Excluding costs of tied studentships, which cannot be vired). Transfers will be at the rate applicable for the heading, as set out in the offer letter i.e. at 80% for Directly Incurred Costs and 100% for Exceptions.

### **Inspection**

- 201.** NERC reserves the right to have reasonable access to inspect the records and financial procedures associated with research grants or to appoint any other body or individual for the purpose of such inspection.
- 202.** The Research Organisation must, if required by NERC, provide a statement of account for the grant, independently examined by an auditor who is a member of a recognised professional body, certifying that the expenditure has been incurred in accordance with the research grant terms and conditions.
- 203.** NERC will undertake periodic reviews of Research Organisations within the cross Research Council Dipstick Testing programme to seek assurance that research grants are managed in accordance with the terms and conditions under which they are awarded.

## Section F – APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

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### APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- 204.** Any applicant in a Small, Standard, Consortium or Knowledge Transfer grants round may submit no more than one application as the Principal or a Co-Investigator, and one further application as a Co-Investigator. Small Grants may have one Principal Investigator and up to two Co-Investigators only (including Researcher Co-Investigators). For the New Investigator scheme, the applicant must be the sole investigator and may submit only one application each year.
- 205.** Consortium grant applications will only be accepted if a concept note has previously been received and endorsed by the appropriate Science and Innovation Manager (see Annexe A).
- 206.** Applications must be submitted using the Research Councils Joint Electronic Submission system (Je-S). 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 at <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/je-s/>. Further information can also be obtained by contacting the Je-S Helpdesk by email at [JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk](mailto:JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk) or by telephone on 01793 44 4164.
- 207.** Applicants must ensure that their application is received by NERC by midnight on the relevant closing date (but we recommend that applications are submitted before the Je-S helpdesk closes at 5pm). They should leave enough time for their application to pass through their organisation's Je-S submission route before this date. Any application that is received after the closing date, is incomplete or does not meet NERC's eligibility criteria will be returned to the applicant and will not be considered.
- 208.** Each Project Partner must provide a letter to confirm that support and facilities will be made available.
- 209.** Each Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator, and Project Partner must confirm their consent, or not, of NERC's use of data. As part of its normal business as a publicly funded award-giving body and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, NERC will use personal data provided on the Research Grant application form and acquired subsequently in connection with an application and any resulting award. For further details see Section D.
- 210.** For all applications for NERC research grants, the Principal Investigator must submit form Je-SRP1 (NERC), together with a Case for Support. The Case for Support must be completed in single-spaced typescript of minimum font size 12 point (Times New Roman or Arial font) with margins of at least 1.5cm. References can be presented in a smaller font size provided it is sufficiently clear to ensure good quality reproductions. Applicants should avoid the use of colour graphs or pictures, which NERC cannot guarantee, will be reproduced in colour for referees. Any proposal in which the Case For Support does not comply with these specifications will be rejected. The Case for Support should have two parts:
- Part 1 – Previous Track Record
- Part 2 – A Description of the Proposed Research
- 211.** The Previous Track Record should:
- Provide a summary of the results and conclusions of recent work in the technological/scientific area that is covered by the research proposal. Include reference to both NERC and non- NERC 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 and that of any

associated organisations and beneficiaries.

**212.** The Description of the Proposed Research should address the following points:

- Underlying rationale, scientific and technological issues to be addressed, relevance to users and the potential scientific, practical and socio-economic benefits.
- Specific objectives of the project, including their potential relevance to UK and international research work in the field, relevance to the NERC mission (Annexe B) and anticipated achievements and outputs, including datasets.
- Methodology and approach.
- Programme and/or plan of research.
- Management of both project and resources, identifying the training and career development opportunities for personnel working on the project.
- Long-term stewardship of resulting datasets for potential re-use by other scientists.
- Proposals for wider dissemination of results including those relating to the wider public understanding of science and user communities.
- Justification for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, use of pool staff resources and any access to shared facilities and equipment being sought. Up to one extra page of A4 is allowed for this purpose. No justification for Estates and Indirect Costs is required.

**213.** Where support is requested for a tied studentship, a studentship application form, RS1a, must be completed and attached to the grant application form. This should provide details of the student's project and the training to be provided. The request for a tied studentship must be justified fully in the case for support. All costs for the student's travel and subsistence, consumables etc. must be itemised on the grant application form. Tied studentships may not be included in Small and New Investigator grants but may be included in knowledge transfer grants.

**Standard Grants**

**214.** For Standard Grants the Previous Track Record must not exceed **2** sides of A4 and the Description of the Proposed Research must not exceed **8** sides of A4 (including all necessary tables, references and figures). The justification of resources should be completed as a separate section. Up to an additional **1** side of A4 may be used for this purpose. For each named research staff post and Visiting Researcher, a CV of up to **2** sides of A4 may be attached. CVs are not required for Principal or Co-Investigators.

**Small Grants**

**215.** For Small Grants, the Previous Track Record must not exceed **2** sides of A4 and the Description of the Proposed Research must not exceed **2** sides of A4 (including all necessary tables, references and figures). The justification of resources should be completed as a separate item. Up to an additional **1** side of A4 may be used for this purpose. For each named research staff post and Visiting Researcher, a CV of up to **2** sides of A4 may be attached. CVs are not required for Principal or Co-Investigators.

**New Investigator Grants**

**216.** For New Investigator Grants the Previous Track Record must not exceed **2** sides of A4 and the Description of the Proposed Research must not exceed **8** sides of A4 (including all necessary tables, references and figures). The justification of resources should be completed as a separate item. Up to an additional **1** side of A4 may be used for this purpose. For each named research staff post and Visiting Researcher, a CV of up to **2** sides of A4 may be attached. A CV is not required for the Principal Investigator.

## Consortium Grants

- 217.** Applicants must contact the appropriate Science and Innovation Manager (see Annexe A or the NERC website at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/contacts.shtml>) before submitting a proposal. They will advise the applicants on the most appropriate route for funding and on complementary or competing initiatives. Applicants will then be required to provide a concept note justifying why a consortium bid is more appropriate than a number of standard Blue Skies research grants, or a small Directed Programme application. The appropriate Science and Innovation Manager must approve this concept note before a full proposal is submitted.
- 218.** The concept note may be submitted at any time and should consist of a maximum of **2** pages (A4, 10pt) and should specify:
- Type of proposal (Consortium grant);
  - Title of proposal;
  - List of participants (including, where appropriate, lead Research Organisation, partner Research Organisations, other project partners, actual and expected); NB: the Lead Research Organisation should check the eligibility of all organisations involved before submitting the proposal; NERC will not automatically check eligibility at the concept note stage;
  - Scientific objectives and deliverables;
  - Other relevant objectives and deliverables (e.g. training, capability development, facilities, products, exploitation, dissemination, user uptake);
  - Outline of research proposed;
  - Funding sought from NERC; and
  - Co-funding (proposed and secured).
- 219.** The full bid should consist of:
- A completed NERC research grant application form, Je-SRP1(NERC) for each component Research Organisation, clearly marked as 'Consortium Grant' in the box on the front of the form.
- 220.** A Case for Support comprising:
- A Previous Track Record for each Research Organisation, not exceeding **2** sides of A4 for each Institution and a common Description of the Proposed Research not exceeding **16** sides of A4 (including all necessary tables, references and figures).
  - Justification for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, use of pool staff resources and any access to shared facilities and equipment being sought. This should be completed as a separate case. Up to an additional **1** side of A4 for each Research Organisation may be used for this purpose.
  - A detailed description of the proposed management structures and plans (including data), participant responsibilities, and scheduling chart. This should not exceed **2** sides of A4.
  - For each named research staff post and Visiting Researcher, a CV of up to **2** sides of A4 may be attached. CVs are not required for Principal or Co-Investigators.
- 221.** In addition to the normal requirements for research grant proposals, the Case for Support should include:
- The overarching scientific question, issue or theme that justifies a consortium approach; and
  - Associated collaborations and co-funding (proposed and secured).

- 222.** All applicants will normally be required to provide a verbal presentation to the meeting of the Consortium Grants Moderating Panel.

### **Split Standard and Consortium Grants**

- 223.** For joint applications, the following information should be common to all of the component applications:
- Title of project;
  - Name of Principal Investigator;
  - Type of proposal;
  - Objectives;
  - Summary;
  - Beneficiaries; and
  - Case for support.
- 224.** The following information should be included in the lead Research Organisation application form only:
- Salary costs for Principal Investigator;
  - Nominated referees;
  - Project Partners;
  - Letters of support from project partners; and
  - CVs for named staff and Visiting Researchers.
- 225.** Co-Investigators should only be listed on the relevant component application.

### **Knowledge Transfer**

- 226.** For Knowledge Transfer applications, in the Je-S system please enter scheme as “Knowledge Transfer” and call as “Good Ideas or Networks”. The Previous Track record should not exceed **2** pages of A4 and the Description of the Proposed Research should not exceed **8** pages of A4 for Good Ideas and **6** sides of A4 for Networks. The justification of resources should be completed as a separate section up to an additional **1** side of A4 may be used for this purpose.
- 227.** Named Project Partners (for applications to all knowledge transfer schemes) must provide a detailed letter of support, identifying relevance of the proposed work to the user partners, the full nature of the collaboration and how the partners will be involved in the project. Partner contributions should be explained.
- 228.** For knowledge transfer Networks, letters of support from network members are required where partners will play a significant part in the organisation and running of the network. Otherwise, some evidence that proposed network members have been approached and are interested in participating in the network should be provided in the case for support.
- 229.** Individuals intending to participate in a Network are not required to be identified as Co-Investigators or project partners on the application form except where they have a significant role to play in the establishment and running of the network. In this case partners should be identified as project partners and details of contributions should be provided. Membership of the Network should be



included in the case for support. It is not anticipated that all potential participants will be identified at this stage as membership will grow and change during the life of the Network.

## Connect A

- 230.** Applicants should complete the Connect A application form, which can be found on the NERC website at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms/>. Completed forms should be returned to the NERC Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Team. Applications should **not** be made via the Je-S system. There is no closing date for Connect A applications.

## Partnership Research Grants

- 231.** Applicants for Partnership Research Grants should complete the separate “Partnership Research Grant” application form on the Je-S system. As for Standard Grants, the Previous Track record must not exceed **2** sides of A4 and the Description of the Proposed Research must not exceed **8** sides of A4 (including all necessary tables, references and figures). The justification of resources should be completed as a separate section of up to 1 additional side of A4. For each named research staff post and Visiting Researcher, a CV of up to **2** sides of A4 may be attached. CVs are not required for Principal or Co-Investigators.
- 232.** Letters of support must be attached from each named Project Partner. Letters of support must describe the full nature of the collaboration, how partners will be involved in the project and the relevance of the proposed work to them. Partner contributions in cash and in kind should be detailed.

## Follow on Fund

- 233.** Applications should be made using the form and guidance notes available on the web site at [www.nerc.ac.uk/using/fofund.shtml](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/fofund.shtml), **not** via the Je-S system.

## Other Schemes

- 234.** Details of the application procedures for other schemes can be obtained from the websites and contact points listed in Annexe A.

## Resubmission of Applications

- 235.** For Blue Skies schemes and the International Ocean Drilling Programme (IODP) unsuccessful proposals can be resubmitted after a period of at least **nine months** from the closing date of the original submission. Resubmitted applications will be assessed alongside all other applications and will not receive preferential treatment. No account will be taken of previous reviews or feedback comments from the Moderating Panel in assessing a resubmitted application.
- 236.** Unsuccessful Consortium Grant applications may not be resubmitted unless specifically invited by the Science and Innovation Manager, NERC. In this case, applicants will be advised of the most appropriate closing date.
- 237.** Unsuccessful applications to Directed Programmes cannot be resubmitted into the Programme's subsequent funding rounds. This is because, unlike Blue Skies' schemes, different funding rounds within a Directed Programme often have different funding priorities. A proposal that is unsuccessful in a Directed Programme, but that is within the NERC remit, can be resubmitted into a Blue Skies scheme. Those that are rejected on the basis of programme remit can be resubmitted at any time. However, those that have been through the peer review process cannot be resubmitted until at least nine months after the original closing date.
- 238.** Exceptionally, within a current Directed Programme funding round, a Steering Committee may defer a final grade and/or funding recommendation on an application, in order to seek clarification or a revised proposal from the Principal Investigator. This option will be reserved for applications where there is a strong strategic fit to the Programme, and the science is generally excellent, but clarification/revision of a specific element is required.

## Applications Requesting Sea Time

- 239.** The closing date for sea-time applications is 1 April each year, for sea time in the following calendar year. Standard Research Grant proposals which are associated with an application for sea time must be submitted, together with a copy of the completed ship-time and Marine Equipment (SME) form, to NERC Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Team by 1 July (NB: proposals that are submitted by 1 December will not be funded in time for the 1 April sea time deadline). Cruise programming will commence in April with the first operational programme being published in September. Applications received after the 1 April closing date will only be programmed if a suitable time window remains, and there is enough time to obtain diplomatic clearances. Otherwise these applications will be carried over to the following year.
- 240.** An electronic copy of the associated SME form must be submitted, together with confirmation of full funding for sea-time, to Helen Beadman, (Marine Planning Co-ordinator) by the closing dates if they are to be considered for programming. The SME form is available on the NERC marine planning website at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/marineplan/> and should be sent electronically to Helen Beadman at email: [habe@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:habe@nerc.ac.uk).
- 241.** No research grant involving a sea-time application will be allowed to commence until ship-time has been formally allocated.

## Applications involving High Performance Computing

- 242.** Research grant applications with High Performance Computing requirements should be accompanied by the CSAR Application for National Supercomputing Resources CSAR06/06/03, which is available from: <http://www.csar.cfs.ac.uk/admin/forms.shtml> or from Mrs Deborah Miller, e-mail: [Deborah.Miller@epsrc.ac.uk](mailto:Deborah.Miller@epsrc.ac.uk). The NERC contact for High Performance Computing is Dr Andy Parsons email: [apar@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:apar@nerc.ac.uk).

## Applications for Other NERC Central Facilities

- 243.** Applications to use NERC central facilities other than sea time and High Performance Computing (see above), are made separately from research grant applications. Advice on the application procedure for a particular facility should be sought from the relevant contact given in Annexe A. Requests for data held by the NERC Data Centres (Section L) may be made at any time.

## Applications involving European Space Agency (ESA) data

- 244.** Research Proposals that are associated with the use of ESA data do not need to submit a parallel application into ESA's category 1 peer review process. Successful applicants for NERC research grants will have streamlined access to ESA data providing the request for resources is reasonable. For further information please email: [eoprog@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:eoprog@nerc.ac.uk).

## ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

- 245.** Applications for Blue Skies funding are considered by NERC with the advice of the NERC Peer Review College, drawn from the academic and broader user communities. Applications for Standard Grants received for the July and December closing dates are assessed in two distinct stages:
- During the initial stage of peer review, applications are assessed by members of the NERC Peer Review College. Following their assessment, low graded applications are rejected. This initial sift takes place within two months of the closing date. Applicants are notified whether or not their application will progress to the second stage of the peer review process.
  - Applications not eliminated at this stage are subject to further peer review by reviewers outside the Peer Review College. Applicants have the opportunity to respond to comments made by reviewers at this stage. Final assessment is made by the NERC Moderating Panels. These panels meet in November and May and comprise members of the Peer Review College. Results are usually available in mid December and mid June.

- Applicants for Consortium Grants are also invited to give a short presentation to the Consortium Grants Moderating Panel and answer questions on their application.

- 246.** Applications for Small and New Investigators Grants are subject to a similar process of peer review to that used for Standard Grants, with the exception that applicants do not have the opportunity to respond to reviewers' comments. Investigators are notified of the outcome of their application within five months of the closing date.
- 247.** Proposals for all Blue Skies funding are assessed primarily on scientific excellence, and whilst the subject of the research must fall within the NERC remit, the success or otherwise of a proposal does not depend on its relationship to topics highlighted in the NERC science strategy or other NERC priority areas. Cost effectiveness and the balance of risk to reward are also considered, but are always secondary to scientific excellence. Consortium grants are also considered with respect to added value and project management.
- 248.** Applications for knowledge transfer funding are peer reviewed by members of the NERC Peer Review College (drawn from the academic and science user communities) and reviewers outside the College. Applicants have the opportunity to respond to reviewers' comments. All applications are then considered by the Moderating Panel, which comprises members of the Peer Review College specifically involving representatives from the science user community.
- 249.** Applications for Partnership Research Grants received for the July and December closing dates are assessed alongside Standard Grants via the two-stage process. In addition to science excellence, attention will be given to the value added by the collaboration and clear tangible evidence of Project Partner involvement. Experts from the science user community represented on the Peer Review College and outside will be involved in the assessment process where appropriate.
- 250.** Applications for Connect A grants are assessed according to the following criteria: degree of user involvement, benefits to the UK economy, novelty, cost effectiveness, urgency and inability of other schemes to respond and the likelihood of a future co-funded project emerging. Peer Review College advice is sought, if appropriate.
- 251.** Proposals in Directed Programmes and the Antarctic Funding Initiative (AFI) are assessed through a similar process of peer review, but are considered by the programme's steering committee or a sub-panel. The assessment is based on scientific excellence, but will also consider the relevance of the proposed work to the programme's theme.
- 252.** All applications will be subject to an assessment of the resources requested. All Directly Incurred costs, Investigator effort, use of pooled staff resources and any use of shared facilities and equipment will be scrutinised. However, investigator's salaries, estates and indirect costs will not be examined.
- 253.** Applications cannot be submitted to more than one Research Council. An application may not be submitted for a project for which a grant or fellowship has already been awarded.
- 254.** Applications for funding to complement a grant from the European Union will be considered, but will not receive preferential treatment. NERC must be satisfied that the EU grant covers the full economic costs of that part of the project. Applicants are recommended to consult the relevant Science Programmes Officer (see Annexe A) before submitting the application to the EU.

## Section G – MONITORING AND REPORTING

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- 255.** The Principal Investigator for each research project is responsible for providing information on the outcomes of the research project each year (as part of the annual Output and Performance Measures exercise outlined below). Split Standard and Consortium awards are considered to have one Principal Investigator at the lead Research Organisation. Both will be liable to sanctions if the OPM information is not received.
- 256.** The Principal Investigator for each research project is also required to submit a final report at the end of an award.
- 257.** In general, publication in refereed scientific journals and publication of datasets (e.g. through their deposition with a NERC Data Centre) is the most appropriate way to report and disseminate the findings of a NERC-funded research grant project. NERC is also keen to encourage dissemination to users of science and to non-scientific audiences (see Sections H and J).

### Final Reports and Final Expenditure Statements

- 258.** The Research Organisation must submit a report on the conduct and outcome of the project within three months of the end of the research grant. No further application from a Principal Investigator will be considered while a final report is overdue. From September 2005, there will be the option of electronic submission via the Je-S system.
- 259.** The Final Report comprises either:
- a completed (hard copy) Final Report form (available at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms>), summarising basic information on original objectives, achievements, output etc, plus an attached list of publications; or
  - a completed electronic Final Report form, plus an attached report of no more than one side of A4 (three sides of A4 for Consortium Grants), minimum font size 12 point.
- 260.** For split Standard and Consortium awards, one Final Report form and a list of publications, covering the whole project, should be submitted by the Principal Investigator. Split Standard and Consortium awards are considered to have one Principal Investigator at the lead Research Organisation. Both will be liable to sanctions if the final report is not received.
- 261.** The Principal Investigator must apply in writing to NERC for a postponement of the due date of the Final Report if there are exceptional reasons preventing its submission on time. Such requests should be sought from NERC by submitting a completed “Requests for Time-Only Extensions” pro-forma (GE1) detailing reasons for, and duration of, the request to the relevant Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Teamleader (see Annexe A). The extension form is available on the NERC website: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/forms/> Please note: any such request will not be automatically approved.
- 262.** A Final Expenditure Statement will also be required from each Research Organisation within three months of each grant ending. This includes all component grants of split Standard and Consortium awards. The appropriate form will be sent to the Research Organisation’s finance department at the end of the award or will be available via the Je-S system. With respect to the component awards of a split Standard or Consortium grant, the final payment of an award will not be released until the Final Expenditure Statement is received. The final payment to the lead Research Organisation on a grant will not be released until both the Final Expenditure Statement and the Final Report form have been received.
- 263.** Failure to submit either the required Final Expenditure Statement or Final Report form within three months of the end of all components of the award, without NERC’s prior written agreement to a postponement, will mean that NERC will not consider any applications of funding from the Principal

Investigator, including any already submitted, until the reports are received. NERC will also invoke the financial sanctions detailed in Section E and will also consider the imposition of further sanctions against the Principal Investigator, typically that the Principal Investigator should be barred from submitting any further requests for funding for up to three years.

- 264.** Final Reports from research grants will be evaluated by the relevant Science Programmes Officer or his/her alternate and graded either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Final Reports from Directed programme grants will be assessed by the members of the Programme's Steering Committee.
- 265.** Where a Final Report is judged to be unsatisfactory the Principal Investigator will be asked to submit an amended report to provide a formal response to specific issues of concern. If the grading is upheld as unsatisfactory, the Principal Investigator will be barred from submitting further grant applications for a specified period.

#### **Annual Reporting of Output and Performance Measures (OPM)**

- 266.** NERC, along with the other Research Councils, is required to report to the Office of Science and Technology annually on the outputs from research grants during the previous financial year. A similar report is also made to NERC Council. This information is collected by the NERC Evaluation Team.
- 267.** All Principal Investigators must complete an annual on-line questionnaire on the specific outputs from their research grants. Information requested includes: publications, new or improved products, services or equipment developed, knowledge transfer and possible beneficiaries, external co-funding, patents and public understanding of science initiatives. Short summaries, in plain English, of scientific achievements or advances during the previous year will also be required.
- 268.** The OPM questionnaire will form part of the Research Outputs Database (ROD), and be accessible via a web-based interface. Log-on details will be sent to the Principal Investigator of each grant before the end of the financial year (31 March). ROD will be available year round for data entry and editing, however all information relating to a particular financial year must be entered by the following 31st May.
- 269.** OPMs are collected annually on all current research grants and all completed grants up to three years after funding has ceased.

## Section H - COMMUNICATING YOUR SCIENCE

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- 270.** NERC expects award-holders to communicate their science to local and national audiences, and to raise awareness of how science affects issues of public interest. This is encouraged for several reasons – the public ultimately pays for the research, it is in the interest of the scientist to foster interest in and understanding of science, and communicating science to the public is a commitment set out in the NERC Charter. Applicants should outline their ideas and/or specific proposals for meeting this aspect of the NERC mission within the case for support. If costs are known in advance, they should be listed under the Directly Incurred cost heading. If they are not known, Principal Investigators may, where savings elsewhere on the grant permit, use funds for public engagement activities. This expenditure should also be shown under the Directly Incurred cost heading on the Final Expenditure Statement.
- 271.** Guidance notes, “Communicating your Ideas”, are available from NERC as a booklet ([www.nerc.ac.uk/insight/publications/orderpubs.asp](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/insight/publications/orderpubs.asp)) or may be viewed online at: [www.nerc.ac.uk/insight/support/](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/insight/support/). Training courses on science communication are free to NERC fund-holders. Help and advice on what to do, whom to contact and best practice in science communication are available from NERC’s Communications Team (tel: 01793 411623, email: [requests@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:requests@nerc.ac.uk)).
- 272.** The media often cover science stories, but publicity can sometimes be difficult for scientists if the issues are contentious. Principal Investigators can seek advice from the NERC Press Office (tel: 01793 41727), as well as from their own Institution’s press office, before stories get into the news. Alerting the press offices to possible media interest in advance of a paper being published is helpful in getting positive coverage.
- 273.** Principal Investigators will be asked to give details of their science communication activities on the annual Output and Performance Measures exercise. Researchers can contact NERC at any time with ideas for our magazine “Planet Earth”, or to nominate research to be featured in the NERC Annual Report. Please email or telephone the editors ([editors@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:editors@nerc.ac.uk), 01793 411568 and 411561) with a brief (50 – 80 word) outline of your story.
- 274.** Researchers involved with Directed Programmes will be expected to take part in an end of programme event aimed at non-scientists.

## Section I - PUBLICATION OF WORK

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### Publication of Work

- 275.** All NERC award-holders are expected to publish the results of their research in the appropriate journals. They are, however, invited to consult NERC if other arrangements seem desirable. All published papers should acknowledge support received from NERC and should include the award reference number(s).
- 276.** A copy of data resulting from the research should be offered to the appropriate NERC Data Centre (Section L, and see below).
- 277.** NERC reserves the right of access to all unpublished papers, records, or collections resulting from the work carried out under an award, some of which may be required to be deposited with NERC. Similarly NERC reserves the right to use information on the outcome of fellowships, grants or studentships in annual reports, strategic plans, and for scientific and financial audit, and may from time to time require current and former award holders to provide detailed information on the results of work funded.

### Data Availability

- 278.** It is NERC policy to increase the visibility and awareness of environmental data and to improve their management as an overall resource. Award-holders should therefore make sure that NERC Designated Data Centres (Section L) are aware of significant datasets generated, or to be compiled, under the award so that their long-term stewardship can be assured or planned.

### Deposition of organisms in culture collections

- 279.** Where published work includes the description of new species or subspecies or other novel organisms, Principal Investigators are expected to make these available to other researchers through deposition in a recognised culture collection. Recognised collections are considered to be those which publish catalogues of holdings and which make organisms available for sale to all UK researchers with appropriate expertise.
- 280.** Organisms should be offered to the most appropriate UK culture collection. If no UK collection is able to accept them, they should be offered to a recognised overseas collection. If no collections will accept the organisms it is expected that the Principal Investigator should make them available to the scientific community for a minimum period of 2 years following publications of any paper describing those organisms.
- 281.** Principal Investigators should note that the requirements of intellectual property rights may mean that organisms may have to be lodged in a culture collection registered for this purpose under the 1977 Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the purpose of Patent Procedure.

## Section J – EXPLOITATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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- 282.** NERC is committed to turning scientific and technological knowledge in universities and other research organisations into commercial success for the benefit of the UK. NERC has a strategy to improve the commercialisation of NERC science and activities in our research and collaborative centres. Recipients of NERC funding **must** endeavour to ensure that the outcomes of research programmes are exploited and used to the advantage of the UK. Commercialisation includes contributing to new products and services and the management of intellectual property rights as outlined below.
- 283.** Scientific research gives rise to inventions such as new devices, materials or processes, ideas, know-how and other results which are often manifest as data. Such products are referred to as Intellectual Property. It is NERC's policy that any such Intellectual Property generated from NERC supported research should be exploited. However, NERC's policy requires that Intellectual Property rights be properly conferred on all parties. It is the responsibility of Principal Investigators to respect the Intellectual Property of others when used in their research (e.g. models) and to accord it all appropriate recognition.
- 284.** It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation, and all engaged in the research, to make every effort to ensure that any potentially valuable results obtained in the course of the research are exploited, and that there is a suitable return to the Research Organisation and the researchers from any such exploitation. The Research Organisation must ensure that all those associated with the research are aware of, and accept, the arrangements for exploitation.
- 285.** Unless stated otherwise, the ownership of intellectual property, and responsibility for its exploitation, rests with the Research Organisation. NERC may, in individual cases, reserve the right to retain ownership of intellectual property and to arrange for it to be exploited for the national benefit and that of the Research Organisation involved. This right, if exercised, will be set out in an additional condition.
- 286.** Ownership of any Intellectual Property should be clearly set out prior to any collaborative work commencing and should be clarified prior to exploitation. Dual or multiple-ownership should be avoided. The terms of collaboration agreements must not conflict with the NERC terms and conditions of research grants.
- 287.** In the case of studentships, the Intellectual Property ownership initially lies with the student. However, many Research Organisations have their own policy that is applicable locally. In many cases, it is in the best interest of the student for ownership to be vested with the Research Organisation, which will have greater negotiating powers and will be able to seek the best returns in any exploitation agreement. All matters concerning Intellectual Property should be established at the outset of the studentship. This is particularly important for CASE and Tied Studentships.
- 288.** Award holders are expected to notify the Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Team when NERC funded Intellectual Property is exploited.
- 289.** Further advice on specific issues of intellectual property can be obtained from the Commercial Team at NERC Swindon Office (01793 11764). Further details on Intellectual Property management and exploitation in NERC is available from the NERC website at <http://net.nerc.ac.uk/business/exploit/>.
- 290.** NERC Data Centres (Section L) will give advice on issues relating to copyright, licensing and exploitation of datasets. NERC policy in this area is described in more detail in the NERC Data Policy Handbook, available from NERC's Data Management Co-ordinator Mark Thorley, email: [mrt@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:mrt@nerc.ac.uk) tel: (01223) 221594, or see <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/data/policy.shtml>.



## Section K – NERC SCIENTIFIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

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- 291.** NERC provides a wide range of scientific services for the environmental sciences research community (see <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/services/>). Any individual or group of researchers eligible for a NERC training award or research grant may apply for access to any of the services and facilities listed. For some of these, access is provided free to the user, subject to peer-review and prioritisation of applications to ensure that the highest quality science is supported. In other cases, they are not operated by NERC and are funded on a pay-as-you-go basis. Researchers can only apply to these facilities once they have secured funds to cover the full costs from one or other of the NERC funding modes or other sources (although limited support is available for students and small proof-of-concept studies). Spare capacity in any of the facilities may be made available to non-NERC researchers or commercially.
- 292.** Application procedures are outlined below. Prospective applicants must first seek the advice of the appropriate NERC or service contact before a formal application is submitted. Applications for the use of facilities to support student training should be made by the student's supervisor.
- 293.** It is important to state on studentship and grant application forms what services and facilities are required, with whom contact has been made to discuss the work, and whether a separate application has been made to the relevant facility.
- 294.** A full listing of individual Services and Facilities contacts (and Swindon Office alternates) can be found at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/services/service-contacts.shtml>.

### Research Vessels and Marine Equipment

- 295.** A fleet of two multi-purpose research ships and one ice-class polar research vessel is used for oceanic and continental shelf research. A comprehensive range of marine research equipment is also available within the National Marine Equipment Pool, which is maintained on behalf of the NERC community by the UK Ocean Research Services at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton. The research vessel Prince Madog is also available to the NERC community on a pay-as-you-go basis. Sea time application forms and further information are available from the marine planning website (<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/marineplan/>).

### High Performance Computing

- 296.** NERC peer reviews and co-ordinates requests to use UK national High Performance Computing (HPC) facilities for research in the environmental sciences. The two national HPC facilities are the CSAR service based at the University of Manchester and HPCX at Daresbury Laboratory. More information can be found at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/services/hpc/index.shtml> <http://www.csar.cfs.ac.uk> or [www.hpcx.ac.uk](http://www.hpcx.ac.uk).

### Airborne Research

- 297.** The Airborne Remote Sensing Facility operates a Dornier 228 research aircraft, in support of campaigns in the UK and in Europe. Airborne sensors available include an aerial survey camera, a multi-spectral scanner and an imaging spectrometer and profiling LiDAR. In addition the aircraft can support atmospheric applications and is configured with Pressure/Temperature sensors, air sample inlets and underwing pylons for particle measurement systems. Application forms inviting participation in a given campaign are issued the previous year in June for return by 1 December. The closing date for applications for flying in the following year's season is 1 October. Data from previous campaigns are held by the NERC Earth Observation Data Centre (see Section L).
- 298.** The Facility for Airborne Atmospheric Measurements (FAAM) provides NERC research grant holders in universities, NERC Research Centres, and other eligible Research Organisations engaged in research within the NERC remit, with access to the BAE SYSTEMS 146-300 Atmospheric Research Aircraft. FAAM is a partnership between NERC, the Met Office, and the UK university community, and is operated on behalf of the partners by the University of Manchester. The large capacity and endurance of the 146 make it ideal for atmospheric research in the areas of cloud physics, atmospheric radiation, atmospheric chemistry, satellite activities, mesoscale meteorology

and boundary layer studies, plus certain remote sensing applications requiring a multi-engine aircraft.

- 299.** The aircraft is provided on an infrastructure/superstructure basis. More details can be found at <http://faam.nerc.ac.uk>. NERC-funded users will have to secure funding to cover the superstructure element. NERC will provide the infrastructure element for successful applications. Possible funding sources are: Standard Research Grants (1 July, last round for the following year); Small Research Grants (1 September for the following year, but 15 September for 2005); Directed Programmes; or external funding sources. Prospective users should discuss technical requirements, availability and other operational issues with the FAAM Aircraft Manager, Mr Nick Price ([nick.price@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:nick.price@nerc.ac.uk)), as early as possible before submitting their applications. Flying application forms and further information are available from this website and the FAAM website above. A range of ground-based and airborne atmospheric instrumentation is available within the NERC Centres for Atmospheric Science (NCAS) Instrument Pool, for details see <http://ufam.nerc.ac.uk/ufam/instruments.html>.
- 300.** A fully signed Flying Application Form must accompany the NERC Research Grant Application Form (JeSRP1(NERC)) when aircraft time is required. Applications will be rejected by NERC if this form is missing. .

### **Remote Sensing**

- 301.** The Dundee Satellite Receiving Station acquires and archives data from a number of meteorological and environmental monitoring satellites. The station and NEODC hold an extensive archive of historical data.
- 302.** The NERC Earth Observation Data Centre (NEODC, see Section L) purchases and provides access to commercially available satellite data. NEODC archives ARSF airborne ATM and CASI Data.
- 303.** The Remote sensing Data Analysis Service, located at the Plymouth Marine Laboratory, processes satellite imagery, providing quality-controlled data in forms requiring minimal extra processing. The Service can, by prior arrangement, supply near-real-time data (for example in support of research cruises).
- 304.** The NERC Space Geodesy Facility exists to provide satellite tracking data and related products. World data are combined to produce a global reference frame, enabling exploitation of satellite altimeter and SAR data (for global change studies); detailed studies of the Earth's gravity field, rotation rate and their temporal variations and direct measurements of plate tectonics. For more information please contact the facility.
- 305.** The British Isles GPS archive Facility (BIGF) is a NERC facility delivering archived GPS data to the scientific community, from the British Isles network of over fifty continuous GPS Stations.

### **Equipment Pools**

- 306.** The Geophysical Equipment Pool, at Edinburgh University, provides equipment for seismology, geomagnetism, ground-penetrating radar, and global positioning systems.
- 307.** Support and training for remote sensing projects is provided by the Equipment Pool for Field Spectroscopy at the University of Edinburgh.

### **Analytical Facilities**

- 308.** These include:
- NERC Radiocarbon Laboratory, at East Kilbride, for environmental sciences projects.
  - Oxford University Radiocarbon Accelerator Dating Service for archaeological sciences.
  - NERC Isotope Geosciences Laboratory at Keyworth (stable and radiogenic isotope analyses).

- Isotope Community Support Facility, at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) at East Kilbride (stable and radiogenic isotope, ICP and laser microprobe mass spectrometry).
- Argon Isotope Facility, at SUERC, East Kilbride, for Ar - Ar dating and co-ordination of sample irradiations.
- Life Science Mass Spectrometry Facility, with three nodes at SUERC (for animal science applications), Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Lancaster (specialising in plant science) and the University of Bristol for organic compound specific applications.
- U-Series Facility at the Open University for collaborative application of U-series systems to NERC-related research, in particular geochemistry, Quaternary science, archaeology and hydrogeology.
- Ion Microprobe Facility, and electron microprobe facilities for tephrochronology and ion microprobe-related work, with use of SEM, at Edinburgh University.
- The Inductively-Coupled Plasma Facility with nodes at Royal Holloway, University of London for Atomic Emission Spectrometry (ICP-AES) and University of Kingston for Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS).

### Other Facilities

- 309.** The Mesosphere, Stratosphere and Troposphere Radar Facility is operated by the University of Wales, Aberystwyth but is managed by CCLRC (Council for the Central Laboratory for the Research Councils) from the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory (RAL).
- 310.** The Chilbolton Advanced Meteorological Radar Facility is also managed by CCLRC from RAL. This service is operated under *pay-as-you-go* conditions. Users should contact the facility before submitting their application.
- 311.** The Molecular Spectroscopy Facility at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory provides services and facilities for spectroscopic studies of gases, aerosols, liquids and solids, from far infra-red to ultra-violet wavelengths.
- 312.** The British Ocean Sediment Core Repository is based at the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton.
- 313.** The Molecular Genetics Facility at the University of Sheffield provides state of the art molecular genetics services.
- 314.** Access via peer review to two other major CCLRC facilities: the Synchrotron Radiation Source (SRS) at Daresbury Laboratory and the ISIS pulsed neutron and muon source (both at Rutherford Appleton Laboratory) is now free at the point of delivery and applicants should contact the facility before submitting their application.

### British Antarctic Survey

- 315.** In cases requiring access to facilities of the British Antarctic Survey (BAS), Cambridge, or provision of Antarctic samples by BAS, applicants should discuss their proposals with BAS (tel. 01223 221400) before submitting a formal application.

### Applications to Support the Provision of New Services and Facilities

- 316.** In addition to research grants from the Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Team, NERC can provide funds to support wider use of facilities in Research Organisations. Applications for such funds should be submitted on a customised form available from Dr Lin Kay, e-mail: [rlfk@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:rlfk@nerc.ac.uk), and submitted by the closing date of 1 July each year.

- 317.** Applications in this category should offer a wider collaborative service role, either exclusively or in addition to a specific research role. Applications will be considered in January by the Services Review Group (SRG), which has membership consisting of Science and Innovation Strategy Board and Peer Review College members. The SRG considers applications for funding new services in conjunction with applications for renewal of funding from existing services, employing a scoring system to obtain a priority-ordered list, and making recommendations to Director, Science and Innovation. Support from the Services budget where staff and recurrent expenditure are involved is normally in the form of a contract for up to five years. The Scientific Services Management Team carries out administration of awards and contracts for central facilities.

## Section L – NERC DESIGNATED DATA CENTRES

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- 318.** Council has delegated responsibility for data, and the implementation of its data policies, to seven Designated Data Centres (see below). The Data Centres can be approached for advice on data issues. In particular they should be consulted if projects will be requiring data as an input to research, or will be generating as output, major datasets that should be accorded a secure future.
- 319.** It is NERC policy that recipients of NERC funding must offer to deposit with NERC a copy of datasets resulting from the research, for use by other bona fide researchers, but without prejudice to the intellectual property rights of the originator of the data.
- 320.** It is important to distinguish the Data Centres' responsibility for data in their science area from actual data custody itself. Some Data Centres are resourced to undertake the latter, with scientists physically transferring to them datasets for subsequent central custody and stewardship. Some do not undertake physical custody at all, but are aware of where datasets are held, and co-ordinate those who do hold them; the datasets themselves may therefore be dispersed widely in NERC institutes, academia or other bodies. Other Designated Data Centres lie between the extremes, maintaining some discipline-related data, but with substantial holdings managed elsewhere.
- 321.** Further information on the NERC Data Centres and NERC data policy can be found at: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/data/>.
- 322.** The NERC MetaData Gateway simultaneously searches the catalogues of data held at several of the NERC designated data centres. The outcome of your search will be a list of relevant datasets. Clicking on any one of these will take you back to the relevant dataset web page at the designated data centre. Further information concerning this search tool can be found at: <http://www.nmp.rl.ac.uk>.

### Antarctic Environmental Data Centre

Responsible for all NERC's data from the Antarctic, regardless of discipline

British Antarctic Survey  
High Cross  
Madingley Road  
Cambridge CB3 0ET

tel 01223-221594  
fax 01223-362616  
e-mail [aedc@bas.ac.uk](mailto:aedc@bas.ac.uk)

### British Atmospheric Data Centre

Responsible for atmospheric sciences data

Rutherford Appleton Laboratory,  
Chilton  
Didcot  
Oxon OX11 0QX

tel 01235-446432  
fax 01235-445848  
e-mail [badc@rl.ac.uk](mailto:badc@rl.ac.uk)

### **British Oceanographic Data Centre**

Responsible for marine data.

Centre for Coastal and Marine Sciences  
Proudman Oceanographic Laboratory  
6 Brownlow Street  
Liverpool L3 5DA

tel 0151-7954800  
fax 0151-7954801  
e-mail [bodcmail@pol.ac.uk](mailto:bodcmail@pol.ac.uk)

### **Environmental Information Centre**

Responsible for terrestrial and freshwater ecological data

CEH Monks Wood  
Monks Wood  
Abbots Ripton  
Huntingdon  
Cambs. PE17 2LS

tel 01487-772400  
fax 01487-773467  
e-mail [dor@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:dor@ceh.ac.uk)

### **National Geoscience Data Centre**

Responsible for geosciences data.

British Geological Survey  
Keyworth  
Nottingham NG12 5GG

tel 0115-9363220  
fax 0115-9363552  
e-mail [ngdc@bgs.ac.uk](mailto:ngdc@bgs.ac.uk)

### **National Water Archive**

Responsible for NERC's hydrological data and for the Government's National River Flow Archive.

CEH Wallingford  
Wallingford  
Oxon OX10 8BB

tel 01491-838800  
fax 01491-692424  
e-mail [nwamail@ioh.ac.uk](mailto:nwamail@ioh.ac.uk)

### **Earth Observation**

Responsible for Earth Observation data held by NERC, notably the imagery from NERC airborne surveys, and NERC's archive of imagery from commercial sources.

NERC Earth Observation Data Centre  
Rutherford-Appleton Laboratory  
Chilton  
Didcot  
Oxon OX11 0QX

tel 01235-446168  
fax 01235-445848  
e-mail [neodc@rl.ac.uk](mailto:neodc@rl.ac.uk)

### **Science-based Archaeology**

NERC's science-based archaeology community is encouraged to deposit data with the Archaeological Data Service:

Department of Archaeology  
University of York  
King's Manor  
York YO1 2EP

tel 01904 433954  
fax 01904 433939 e-mail [help@ads.ahds.ac.uk](mailto:help@ads.ahds.ac.uk)

## ANNEXE A – CONTACT POINTS

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The information on this page is correct as of June 2005. For the most up-to-date listing, please see <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/contacts.shtml>. The NERC staff listed below can provide advice on policy, the administration of awards or on specific scientific issues. Queries relating to the Je-S system (including FEC queries) should be directed to the Je-S Helpdesk ([JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk](mailto:JeSHelp@rcuk.ac.uk); tel: 01793 444164). The NERC complaints procedure is outlined in Annexe C.

### **Science Programmes Officers**

Area	Name	Tel (01793)	email @nerc.ac.uk
Atmospheric Sciences	Dr Louisa Watts	1609	Lw
Earth Sciences	Dr Adele Gardner	411736	Adga
Freshwater Sciences	Dr Caroline Culshaw	442597	Ccul
Marine Sciences	Ms Katherine Branch	411799	Kabr
Terrestrial Sciences	Dr Sarah Collinge	411936	Saco
Science-Based Archaeology	Dr Sally Palmer	411701	Sepal
Knowledge Transfer	Ms Poppy Leeder	411512	Fvl

### **Administration of Studentships and Fellowships**

Area	Name	Tel (01793)	email @nerc.ac.uk
Process Manager	Dr Avril Allman	411665	Aval
Team Leader	Mr Nick Midwinter	411648	Nmid
Team Leader	Mrs Jane Proctor	411792	Japr
Universities A – Leeds	Mr Kevin Crook	411713	Kcro
Universities Leicester – Z	Mr Keith Ray	411508	Kray

### **Administration of Research Grants**

Area	Name	Tel (01793)	email @nerc.ac.uk
Management of Peer Review College	Mrs Angela Morrison	411794	Ajm
Research Grants Manager	Dr Anne McFarlane	411527	Ammcf



Team Leader Research Grants	Mr Jim Aland	411629	Jeal
Research Grants Finance Officer	Mr Richard Roberts	411559	Riro
Team Leader, Research Grants Earth Sciences, Freshwater Sciences and Special Schemes (including Polar and Earth Observation)	Mr Chris Brookes	411664	Chbr
Team Leader Research Grants, Terrestrial, Freshwater, Marine and Atmospheric Sciences	Mrs Linda Chivers	411614	Lich

#### **Policy, Evaluation and Programme Management**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Tel (01793)</b>	<b>email @nerc.ac.uk</b>
Business Manager (all areas)	Ms Judy Parker	411655	Jmp
Evaluation (all areas)	Ms Sue Francis	411657	Sf
Policy, Studentships and fellowships	Dr Avril Allman	411655	Aval
Policy Research Grants	Dr Anne McFarlane Mr Jim Aland Mr Andy Adams Dr Helen Butler (fEC queries)	411527 411629 442503 442574	Ammcf Jeal Anad Hb
Science and Innovation Manager Terrestrial and Freshwater Sciences	Dr Pamela Kempton	411588	Pdk
Science and Innovation Manager Marine Sciences	Dr Phil Newton	411636	Ppn
Science and Innovation Manager Earth Sciences	Dr Chris Franklin	411708	Cfr
Science and Innovation Manager Polar and Atmospheric Sciences	Dr Tracey Henshaw		
Science and Innovation Manager Earth Observation	Dr Susanne Mecklenburg	411752	smme

<b>Area</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Tel</b> <b>(01793)</b>	<b>email</b> <b>@nerc.ac.uk</b>
Cross Council Research Initiatives	Dr Chris Baker	411758	ckb

## **ANNEXE B – REMIT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL**

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### **Council Mission**

- 323.** To promote and support, by any means, high-quality basic, strategic and applied research, survey and long-term environmental monitoring and related post-graduate training in terrestrial, marine and freshwater biology and earth, atmospheric, hydrological, oceanographic and polar sciences and earth observation.
- 324.** To advance knowledge and technology and to provide services and trained scientists and engineers that meet the needs of users and beneficiaries, thereby contributing to the economic competitiveness of the UK, the effectiveness of public services and policy, and the quality of life.
- 325.** To provide advice, disseminate knowledge and promote public understanding of the aforesaid fields.

### **User Communities**

- 326.** Include Water, Construction, Process Hydrocarbons, Minerals, Forestry, Agricultural, Fishing and Remote-sensing Industries together with Nature Conservation and other Regulatory Agencies, Universities and Cognate Government Departments.

### **Environmental and Natural Resource Issues**

- 327.** NERC identifies five environmental and natural resource issues on the UK's agenda through which it focuses its research activities:
- Biodiversity;
  - Environmental Risks and Hazards;
  - Global Change;
  - Natural Resource Management;
  - Pollution and Waste.

### **Remit of Blue Skies Moderating Panels**

- 328.** Research proposals should be focused on issues affecting the environment and must clearly demonstrate how the proposed work would directly benefit and improve our understanding of environmental sciences. NERC welcomes interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary proposals. Possible areas of research are:
- Aeolian transport and post depositional processes;
  - Archaeological materials, including the analysis of materials and conservation in their natural environment;
  - Archaeological prospection techniques;
  - Atmospheric sciences and technology, from the land surface to the mesopause;
  - Atmospheric chemistry and physics, from near-ground atmospheric reactions to stratospheric chemistry;
  - Biodiversity and taxonomy studies of organisms in their natural environment;

- Biology of organisms at the level of individuals, populations or communities in relation to their natural environment;
- Climatology;
- Coastal processes (e.g. sediment dynamics);
- Earth observation science and technology;
- Engineering geology;
- Environment and health;
- Fluvial geomorphology and erosion of land surfaces by water;
- Freshwater sciences;
- Glaciology (glacial tectonics, ice deformation and mechanics);
- Geochemistry;
- Geophysics: freshwater, marine and terrestrial;
- Hydrogeology;
- Hydrology and glacial hydrology;
- Limnology;
- Marine biology;
- Marine science;
- Meteorology from micrometeorology to large-scale atmospheric dynamics and transport, including modelling; instrument development; laboratory and field studies.;
- Mineralogy;
- Ocean-atmosphere interactions;
- Oceanography, physical and chemical;
- Palaeontology;
- Planetology (where relevant to Earth System Science);
- Petrology;
- Resource geology;
- Sea ice/climate interactions;
- Sedimentology;
- Science-based archaeology including evolution of human diet, health and disease: human evolutionary history: modelling change in human ecosystems: dating methods and processes affecting the archaeological record;
- Soil science (environmental aspects only);
- Surface geomorphology (i.e. slopes, erosion of land surfaces);

- Structural and tectonic studies;
- Taphonomy;
- Terrestrial sciences;
- Volcanology;
- Water chemistry, associated sediment and groundwater studies.

## ANNEXE C – NERC COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

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### Introduction

- 329.** The NERC Science and Innovation Funding Research Grants Team deal with a large number of grant, fellowship and studentship holders. Within such a large community it is inevitable that individuals and institutions will have comments, complaints, grievances and ideas relating to NERC policy and procedures. We welcome these, but with so many prospective points of entry into NERC, it is important that the academic community is aware of whom to contact and how. This is especially important in instances of formal grievance or complaint.

### Background

- 330.** NERC uses expertise and advice from a variety of NERC Committees and Boards as well as from individual scientists, representatives of Government agencies and external interest groups. These contributions are invaluable and are an essential part of the way that NERC delivers funding and support. However, ultimate responsibility for decisions, actions, administration and management rests with Council and NERC officers. NERC officers must therefore be the first recipients for complaints and grievances, not the chairs or members of Review Panels or members of the Peer Review College.

### Procedure

- 331.** Anyone with a complaint should initially discuss the problem(s) with the appropriate NERC officer. Current contacts and their areas of responsibility are listed in Annex A.
- 332.** Formal complaints should be directed in writing (by post or e-mail) to the appropriate NERC officer, who will aim to acknowledge receipt of the complaint and/or seek clarification within ten working days.
- 333.** The appropriate NERC officer will investigate the complaint, and will try to resolve the problem(s) to the complainant's satisfaction. If problems submitted to named NERC officers are not resolved within a reasonable time, they should also be sent in writing to the Business Manager, Science and Innovation Funding, Ms Judy Parker email : [jmp@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:jmp@nerc.ac.uk).
- 334.** If the responses from the relevant NERC officer and the Business Manager are not felt to be satisfactory, complainants should write to the Director, Swindon Office, Mr John Hansford, at the following address:

Natural Environment Research Council

Polaris House

North Star Avenue

Swindon, Wilts SN2 1EU

## ANNEXE D – STATEMENT OF COUNCIL POLICY ON VESTED INTERESTS

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- 335.** NERC utilises the expertise, knowledge and advice of the international academic and research community, representatives from Government agencies, industry and elsewhere. Their involvement is an essential contribution to the Council's decision-making processes, many of which lead to the allocation of public funds.
- 336.** In order to protect the integrity of Council and individuals on its Committees (\*), it is important to set out expectations and standards to avoid or reduce the risk of impropriety in the conduct of business and allocation of funds. Similarly it is important that Council has transparent and documented procedures to allay any public concerns. HM Treasury have produced guidelines for use by publicly funded agencies. In this context, this paper sets out the arrangements to be applied and adhered to by all members of NERC Committees who have a vested interest. This is defined as:
- being associated with the Research Organisations, departments or individuals submitting the proposal,
  - being involved, in any way, in the development, or implementation of proposals seeking Council funds or in the evaluation of research investments.
- 337.** If it is not obvious or immediately apparent, Committee members must inform the NERC official acting as Secretary to the Committee, or the Chairperson, of the exact nature of their vested interest. This applies in all instances where a proposal could result in the allocation of NERC funds or other resources.
- 338.** It is Council policy that:
- Members who have any vested interest should leave the meeting while the proposal is being discussed or considered
  - All papers and background information circulated to members who have a vested interest in the proposal being considered, are censored to remove all references relating to the pre-award assessment or final report evaluation
  - All Committee members are expected to abide by the in confidence nature of much of the business conducted at meetings
  - All vested interests declared, and actions taken, should be recorded in the committee minutes, ensuring a proper audit trail.

(\*) For the purposes of this statement 'Committees' refers to any group convened by, or acting on behalf of, Council or the Chief Executive.

## ANNEXE E – NERC ACADEMIC ANALOGUES

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A limited number of organisations are eligible to apply for NERC funding as recognised Academic Analogues.

In order to be recognised as a NERC Academic Analogue the organisation must meet strict criteria. Recognition is at NERC's discretion. For further information and details of the application procedure please contact Dr Helen Butler ([hb@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:hb@nerc.ac.uk); tel: 01793 442574).

Recognition by NERC does not imply eligibility for funding in any scheme operated by other Research Councils.

The NERC recognised Academic Analogues are listed below:

Armagh Observatory

British Museum

British Trust for Ornithology

CABI Biosciences\*

Centre for Applied Microbiology and Research

Council for the Central Laboratories of the Research Councils

Diamond Light Source

Freshwater Biological Association

Game Conservancy Trust

Harrison Zoological Museum

Marine Biological Association

Natural History Museum

National Museums of Scotland

National Museums of Wales

Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Scottish Agricultural College

Scottish Association for Marine Sciences

Sir Alistair Hardy Foundation for Ocean Sciences

UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre

Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust

- Comprising the International Institutes of Biological Control, Entomology, and Parasitology and the International Mycological Institute.



## ANNEX F – CORE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR RESEARCH GRANTS

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The following core terms and conditions have been agreed across all Research Councils. A copy of the latest version will be sent with all award letters from NERC.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF RESEARCH COUNCIL fEC GRANTS

These terms and conditions relate to grants costed and funded on the basis of full economic costs (fEC), calculated in accordance with the TRAC methodology (universities and other higher education bodies) or by an equivalent methodology by other Research Organisations.

Grants awarded by the Research Councils are made to Research Organisations on the basis of this single set of core terms and conditions:

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)

Medical Research Council (MRC)

Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)

Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC)

Individual Councils may add additional conditions to the grant to reflect the particular circumstances and requirements of their organisation, or the nature of a particular grant. Acceptance of a research grant constitutes acceptance of both the core conditions and any additional conditions.

References in these terms and conditions to statutory provisions and guidance include any subsequent amendments or re-enactments. It is acknowledged and agreed that the concept and operation of fEC is at an early stage and thus the Research Councils reserve the right to vary these terms and conditions as may be necessary or desirable to reflect the development or clarification of fEC or for other reasons.

### Definitions

**Full Economic Costs (fEC):** a price which, if recovered across an organisation's full programme, would recover the total cost (direct, indirect and total overhead) including an adequate recurring investment in the organisation's infrastructure.

**Directly Incurred Costs:** costs that are explicitly identifiable as arising from the conduct of a project, are charged as the cash value actually spent and are supported by an audit record.

**Directly Allocated Costs:** the costs of resources used by a project that are shared by other activities. They are charged to projects on the basis of estimates rather than actual costs and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis.

**Indirect Costs:** non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated Costs. They include the costs of the Research Organisation's administration such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services.

**Exceptions:** Directly Incurred Costs that Research Councils fund at 100% of fEC, subject to actual expenditure incurred, or items that are outside fEC.

**Dipstick Testing:** a programme of visits and office-based tests to seek assurance that research grant funds are used for the purpose for which they are given and that grants are managed in accordance with the terms

and conditions under which they are awarded.

**Principal Investigator:** the person to whom the research project is assigned. The Principal Investigator takes responsibility for the intellectual leadership of the research project and for the overall management of the research.

**Co-Investigator:** a person who assists the Principal Investigator in the management and leadership of a project.

**Research Council:** any of the bodies listed above.

**Research Grant:** a contribution to the costs of a stated research project which has been assessed as suitable for funding through the procedures established by the relevant Research Council. Research Grants provide a proportion of the full economic costs of a project.

**Research Organisation:** the organisation to which the research grant is awarded and which takes responsibility for the management of the research project and the accountability of funds provided.

**Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC):** an agreed methodology used by universities and other higher education bodies for calculating full economic costs.

### **Data Protection Regulations**

The Research Councils will use information provided on the grant proposal form for processing the proposal, the award of any consequential grant, and for the payment, maintenance and review of the grant. This may include:

- Registration of proposals;
- Operation of grants processing and management information systems;
- Preparation of material for use by referees and peer review panels;
- Administration, investigation and review of grant applications;
- Statistical analysis in relation to the evaluation of research and the study of trends;
- Policy and strategy studies.

To meet the Research Councils' obligations for public accountability and the dissemination of information, details of grants may also be made available on the Research Councils' web sites and other publicly available databases, and in reports, documents and mailing lists.

### **Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations**

Attention is drawn to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). Research Councils have issued Publication Schemes, which set out the types of information publicly available on their websites or published as documents. In addition, Research Councils have an obligation to respond to specific requests and may be required to disclose information about or provided by Research Organisations. In some cases the Research Council may consult the Research Organisation before disclosure, but it is under no obligation to do so. If a Research Organisation considers that any information it provides to a Research Council would be subject to an exemption under FOIA or the EIRs it should clearly mark the information as such and provide an explanation of why it considers the exemption applies and for how long. The Research Council will consider this explanation before disclosure, but it is not obliged to accept it as binding.

Where a Research Council determines that a Research Organisation is holding information on its behalf that it requires in order to comply with its obligations under FOIA or EIRs, the Research Organisation undertakes to provide access to such information as soon as reasonably practicable on request of the Research Council and in any event within 5 working days.

In some cases Research Organisations may be directly responsible for complying with FOIA and the EIRs; in

such cases the Research Councils accept no responsibility for any failure to comply by the Research Organisations.

## **RG 1 Responsibilities of the Research Organisation**

- The Research Organisation must ensure that any part of the Full Economic Cost of the project not funded by the Research Council grant is committed to the project before it starts.
- The Research Organisation must ensure that Principal and Co-Investigators are made aware of their responsibilities and that they observe the terms and conditions of research grants.
- The Research Organisation must ensure that the research supported by the grant complies with all relevant legislation and Government regulation, including that introduced while work is in progress. This requirement includes approval or licence from any regulatory body that may be required before the research can commence.
- The Research Organisation is expected to adopt the principles, standards and good practice for the management of research staff set out in the 1996 Concordat for the Career Management of Contract Research Staff, and subsequent amendments. Research staff should be appointed on terms that are no less favourable than those of comparable posts in the Research Organisation.
- The Research Organisation must notify the Research Council of any change in its status, or that of any of the Investigators, that might affect the eligibility to hold a research grant.
- The Research Organisation must ensure that the requirements of the Employing Organisation under the Department of Health's Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care (or equivalent) are met for research involving NHS patients, their organs, tissues or data, and that the necessary arrangements are in place with partner organisations. Where it also accepts the responsibilities of a Sponsor (as defined in the Governance Framework), it must also ensure that the requirements for Sponsors are met.
- The Research Organisation must ensure proper financial management of research grants and accountability for the use of public funds.

## **RG 2 Research Governance**

It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to ensure that the research is organised and undertaken within a framework of best practice that recognises the various factors that may influence or impact on a research project. Particular requirements are to ensure that all necessary permissions are obtained before the research begins, and that there is clarity of role and responsibility among the research team and with any collaborators. The Research Councils expect research to be conducted in accordance with the highest standards of scientific integrity and research methodology.

### **Research Ethics**

The Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that ethical issues relating to the research project are identified and brought to the attention of the relevant approval or regulatory body. Approval to undertake the research must be granted before any work requiring approval begins. Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass, among other things, relevant codes of practice, the involvement of human participants, tissue or data in research, the use of animals, research that may result in damage to the environment and the use of sensitive economic, social or personal data.

## **Use of Animals in Research**

Wherever possible, researchers must adopt procedures and techniques that avoid the use of animals. Where this is not possible, the research should be designed so that:

- The least sentient species with the appropriate physiology is used;
- The number of animals used is the minimum sufficient to provide adequate statistical power to answer the question posed;
- The severity of procedures performed on animals is kept to a minimum. Experiments should be kept as short as possible. Appropriate anaesthesia, analgesia and humane end points should be used to minimise any pain and suffering.

The provisions of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, and any amendments, must be observed and all necessary licences must have been received before any work requiring approval takes place.

## **Medical and Health Research**

The Research Organisation is responsible for managing and monitoring the conduct of medical and health research in a manner consistent with the Department of Health's Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care (or equivalent). There must be effective and verifiable systems in place for managing research quality, progress and the safety and well being of patients and other research participants. These systems must promote and maintain the relevant codes of practice and all relevant statutory review, authorisation and reporting requirements.

Research involving human participants or data within the social sciences that falls outside the Department of Health's Research Governance Framework must meet the provisions and guidelines of the ESRC's Research Ethics Framework. While this research may involve patients, NHS staff or organisations, it is defined as research that poses no clinical risk or harm to those who are the subjects of research. Research Organisations must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for independent ethics review of social science research that meets local research ethics committee standards.

Significant developments must be assessed as the research proceeds, especially those that affect safety and well-being, which should be reported to the appropriate authorities and to the Research Council. The Research Organisation must take appropriate and timely action when significant problems are identified. This may include temporarily suspending or terminating the research.

The Research Organisation is responsible for managing and monitoring statutory requirements for which it accepts responsibility, for example, in relation to legislation on clinical trials, use of human organs, tissues and data.

Guidance by the MRC on the conduct of medical research, and by ESRC on the conduct of social science research, provided on behalf of all Research Councils, must be observed.

## **Health and Safety**

The Research Organisation is responsible for ensuring that a safe working environment is provided for all individuals associated with a research project. Its approach and policy on health and safety matters must meet all regulatory and legislative requirements and be consistent with best practice recommended by the Health & Safety Executive. Appropriate care must be taken where researchers are working off-site. The Research Organisation must satisfy itself that all reasonable health and safety factors are addressed. The Research Councils reserve the right to require the Research Organisation to undertake a safety risk assessment in individual cases where health and safety is an issue, and to monitor and audit the actual arrangements made.

## **Misconduct and Conflicts of Interest**

The Research Organisation is required to have in place procedures for governing good research practice that meet the requirements of the Research Councils' guidance on good practice. The Research Organisation must ensure that there are reliable systems and processes in place for the prevention of

research misconduct e.g. plagiarism, falsification of data, together with well-defined and clearly publicised arrangements for investigating and resolving allegations of misconduct. Where an allegation of misconduct arises in respect of a researcher supported by a research grant, the Research Council must be informed immediately and notified of the outcome of any investigation.

The Research Organisation must ensure that potential conflicts of interest in research are declared and subsequently managed.

### **RG 3 Use of Funds**

Subject to the following conditions, grant funds may be used, without reference to the Research Council, in such a manner as to best carry out the research. Research grant funds are cash limited and the grant is made on the understanding that its value will not be increased, except as stated in these terms and conditions. Research grant funds are provided for a specific research project. Under no circumstances may Directly Incurred and Exceptions funds be used to meet costs on any other project or activity.

### **RG 4 Starting Procedures**

The start date shown on the starting certificate will be regarded as the start date of the grant. Submission of the starting certificate will also constitute acceptance of the grant, if no other acceptance procedure exists. The start of research may be delayed by up to 6 months (AHRC and ESRC 3 months) from the start date shown in the award letter, the duration of the grant remaining unchanged. The grant may lapse if it is not started within this period. Submission of the starting certificate is required not more **42** days after the start date.

Where there are staff funded by the grant who were intended to be appointed from the start date, payments will take effect from the date when the first such staff start work. Otherwise, payments will take effect from the start date given on the starting certificate.

Expenditure may be incurred prior to the start of research and subsequently charged to the grant, provided that it does not precede the date of the award letter.

### **RG 5 Changes in Research Project**

The Research Council must be consulted in the event of any major change in the proposed research, including failure to gain access to research facilities and services, or to gain ethical committee approval for the research, particularly those which make it unlikely that the objectives of the research can be achieved. If appropriate, revised proposals may be required. The Research Council reserves the right to make a new grant in place of the existing grant, or to revise, retain or terminate the existing grant.

### **RG 6 Transfers of Funds between Fund Headings**

Transfers of funds between fund headings are permitted only within and between Directly Incurred costs and Exceptions. Transfers will be at the rate applicable for the heading, as set out in the offer letter.

### **RG 7 Extensions**

After a research grant has started, the duration may be extended by a total of up to 6 months, subject to prior written approval. Extensions may cover breaks or delays in the appointment of staff, periods of maternity leave or paid sick leave exceeding 3 months for staff funded by the grant, or other exceptional circumstances with the agreement of the Research Council. Requests for extensions should be made as soon as the requirement is identified and confirmed when the period required is known. All requests for extensions must be made before the grant ends.

### **RG 8 Staff**

The Research Organisation must assume full responsibility for staff funded from the grant and, in consequence, accept all duties owed to and responsibilities for these staff, including, without limitation, their terms and conditions of employment and their training and supervision, arising from the employer/employee relationship.

The Research Organisation must provide research staff with a statement, at the outset of their employment,

setting out the provisions for career management and development, including personal skills training, and ensure that they have access to appropriate training opportunities.

Research staff may undertake teaching and demonstrating work for up to 6 hours a week (pro rata for part-time staff) during normal working hours provided that this work is related to the research project to which they were appointed.

### **RG 9 Maternity and Paternity Pay and Leave**

Grant funds may be used for paid maternity or paternity leave for staff within the Directly Incurred and Exceptions fund headings (excluding the Principal and Co-Investigators, unless they are also Research Fellows or Research Assistants funded by the grant), if staff fulfil the qualifying conditions of the Research Organisation. Funding may be sought by the Research Organisation at the end of a grant to cover the additional costs of either a substitute appointment or an extension of the grant. The salary of any substitute appointment must not exceed that of the individual on leave.

Grant funds may be used to provide paid maternity and paternity leave only to the extent that it is taken during the original period of the grant. The Research Organisation will be responsible for any liability for maternity and paternity pay for staff supported by the research grant outside the original period of the grant. If, for example, a research grant ends while a member of research staff is part-way through her maternity leave, the Research Organisation will be responsible for that part of the maternity leave which is taken after the research grant has ended.

### **RG 10 Sick Leave**

Grant funds may be used for paid sick leave for staff within the Directly Incurred and Exceptions fund headings (excluding the Principal and Co-Investigators, unless they are also Research Fellows or Research Assistants funded by the grant) who fulfil the qualifying conditions of the Research Organisation. Where there is a continuous period of sick leave in excess of 3 months, the Research Organisation may apply to the Research Council to discuss the possibility of a substitute appointment to safeguard progress on the project, or an extension to the duration of the project, if the period of leave can be predicted.

For the purposes of the provisions of RG 9 and RG 10, the Research Organisation will be compensated at the end of the grant for any additional costs or time resulting from maternity leave, paternity leave or sick leave, falling within the original period of the grant. The duration of a grant will be extended only if the period can be accommodated within the maximum period allowed for extensions. Directly Allocated and Indirect funds will not be increased as a result of such extensions.

Maternity, paternity and sick pay is not payable by the Research Council for staff acting as Principal and Co-Investigators (unless they are also Research Fellows or Research Assistants funded by the grant), nor to other staff not dedicated to the project nor paid from Directly Incurred or Exceptions funds.

### **RG 11 Procurement of Equipment**

The procurement of equipment, consumables and services, including maintenance, must comply with all relevant national and EU legislation and the Research Organisation's own financial policy and procedures. Accepted procurement best practice in the higher education sector must be observed. For all equipment and services where the contract value is more than £25,000, excluding VAT, professionally qualified procurement staff must be consulted before the procurement process begins, and, where appropriate, at the market research stage, and must approve the order/contract before it is placed with a supplier.

### **RG 12 Ownership and Use of Equipment**

Equipment purchased from grant funds is primarily for use on the research project for which the research grant was awarded, and belongs to the Research Organisation. In certain circumstances the Research Council may wish to retain ownership throughout the period of the grant and possibly beyond. In such cases, the grant will be subject to an additional condition.

The Research Council must be informed if, during the life of the research grant, the need for the equipment diminishes substantially or it is not used for the purpose for which it was funded. The Research Council reserves the right to determine the disposal of such equipment and to claim the proceeds of any sale.

Any proposal to transfer ownership of the equipment during the period of the grant is subject to prior approval by the Research Council. After the research has ended, the Research Organisation is free to use the equipment without reference to the Research Council, but it is nevertheless expected to maintain it for research purposes as long as is practicable.

Where there is spare capacity in the use of the equipment, the Research Council expects this to be made available to other users. Priority should be given to research supported by any of the Research Councils and to Research Council-funded students.

The total fEC charged to a project for the use of equipment must not include any element of depreciation for equipment purchased from Research Council funds.

### **RG 13 Transfer of a Grant**

The Research Organisation must notify the Research Council if the Principal Investigator intends to transfer to another organisation. If this organisation is eligible to hold research grants, and is able to provide a suitable environment to enable the project to be successfully completed, the expectation is that the grant would be transferred with the investigator. Written agreement to this is required from both the relinquishing and receiving organisations.

The Research Council will wish to be assured that satisfactory arrangements have been agreed that will enable the project to be undertaken, or to continue, in accordance with its research objectives. If suitable arrangements cannot be agreed, the Research Council will consider withdrawing its support or terminating the grant.

Where there is a basis for continuing involvement by the relinquishing organisation, agreement should be reached between both organisations on the apportionment of work and the distribution of related funding.

Research Grants will not be re-costed following transfer. The unspent balance of Directly Incurred and Exceptions, together with a pro rata share of Directly Allocated and Indirect costs, will be transferred to the new Research Organisation. The receiving organisation will be required to confirm, by return of a starting certificate, that it will provide any balance of resources needed to complete the project.

### **RG 14 Change of Principal Investigator**

The Research Organisation must consult the Research Council if it is proposed to change the Principal Investigator, for example, following retirement or resignation. Where the Principal Investigator is transferring to another organisation eligible to hold a research grant, the provisions of RG 13 will apply. In other circumstances, the Research Organisation may nominate a replacement Principal Investigator. The Research Council will wish to be assured that the replacement meets the eligibility criteria for Principal Investigators and has the expertise and experience to lead the project to a successful conclusion, in accordance with its research objectives.

### **RG 15 Annual Statement**

The Research Organisation may be required to return a statement each year showing payments made by the Research Council during the previous financial year for all the research grants it holds. Where a statement is required, the Research Organisation must certify, by signing and returning the statement, that:

- Expenditure has been incurred in accordance with the grant conditions, and
- Those grants shown as current are continuing.

No further payments will be made until the signed annual statement has been received by the Research Council.

### **RG 16 Expenditure Statements**

The Research Organisation must complete and return an expenditure statement within 3 months of the end date of a research grant. Once an expenditure statement has been received and the expenditure incurred has been reconciled against payments made, it will be considered as final.

Expenditure shown in the Directly Incurred and Exceptions headings must show the actual expenditure incurred by the project. Settlement by the Research Council will reflect the proportion of fEC stated in the award letter applied to actual expenditure, within the cash limit.

For the Directly Allocated and Indirect Costs headings, the Research Council will pay the amount shown as spent, within the cash limit, provided that the grant ran its full course. Where a grant is terminated more than 6 months before the planned end date, a pro rata share will be paid. Where a grant terminates within 6 months of the planned end date, estates and Indirect Costs will be paid in full, but Investigators' costs and Other Directly Allocated Costs will be paid pro rata.

Costs arising from maternity, paternity or sick leave should be identified in the Absence heading of the statement.

The Research Council reserves the right to require the Research Organisation to complete and submit a statement of expenditure at any time during the course of a research grant, or to provide supplementary information in support of an interim or final expenditure statement.

### **RG 17 Inspection**

The Research Council reserves the right to have reasonable access to inspect the records and financial procedures associated with research grants or to appoint any other body or individual for the purpose of such inspection.

The Research Organisation must, if required by the Research Council, provide a statement of account for the grant, independently examined by an auditor who is a member of a recognised professional body, certifying that the expenditure has been incurred in accordance with the research grant terms and conditions.

Research Councils will undertake periodic reviews of Research Organisations within the Dipstick Testing programme to seek assurance that research grants are managed in accordance with the terms and conditions under which they are awarded.

### **RG 18 Final Report**

A report on the conduct and outcome of the project must be submitted by the Research Organisation within three months of the end of the research grant, on the form provided. No further application from a Principal Investigator will be considered while a final report is overdue.

If there are exceptional reasons that will prevent submission of the final report within the period allowed, a written request may be made, before the due date passes, for the submission period to be extended.

### **RG 19 Sanctions**

If the final report or the final expenditure statement is not received within the period allowed, the Research Council may recover 20% of expenditure incurred on the grant. All payments may be recovered if the report or statement is not received within 6 months of the end of the grant.

### **RG 20 Public Engagement**

It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation and the Principal and Co-Investigators to actively communicate the research to the public at both local and national level, and to raise awareness of the role of science and research in any related issues of public interest. Special schemes exist in some Research Councils providing additional support for these activities.

### **RG 21 Commercial Exploitation**

Unless stated otherwise, the ownership of intellectual property, and responsibility for its exploitation, rests with the Research Organisation. The Research Council may, in individual cases, reserve the right to retain ownership of intellectual property and to arrange for it to be exploited for the national benefit and that of the Research Organisation involved. This right, if exercised, will be set out in an additional condition.

It is the responsibility of the Research Organisation, and all engaged in the research, to make every effort to ensure that any potentially valuable results obtained in the course of the research are exploited, and that



there is a suitable return to the Research Organisation and the researchers from any such exploitation. The Research Organisation must ensure that all those associated with the research are aware of, and accept, the arrangements for exploitation.

Collaborative arrangements are expected to be put on a formal basis through an agreement covering the contributions and rights of the organisations and individuals concerning exploitation. Such agreements must be in place before the research begins. The terms of collaboration agreements must not conflict with the Research Councils' terms and conditions of research grants.

## **RG 22 Research Monitoring and Evaluation**

While it is the responsibility of the Research Organisation to manage the research, the Research Council reserves the right to call for periodic information on progress or to visit the project team. The Principal Investigator may also be asked to attend meetings to exchange information and ideas with others undertaking research in the same or similar fields.

The Principal Investigator must make all reasonable efforts, if so invited, to attend events or activities organised by the Research Council concerning the research undertaken. Such events may be held after a grant has finished.

## **RG 23 Publication and Acknowledgement of Support**

The Principal Investigator should, subject to the procedures laid down by the Research Organisation, publish the results of the research in accordance with normal academic practice. Publications and other forms of media communication, including media appearances, press releases and conferences, must acknowledge the support received from the Research Council, quoting the grant reference number.

## **RG 24 Disclaimer**

The Research Councils accept no liability, financial or otherwise, for expenditure or liability arising from the research funded by the research grant, except as set out in these terms and conditions, or otherwise agreed in writing.

Where studies are carried out in an NHS Trust, the Trust has a duty of care to its patients. The Research Council does not accept liability for any failure in the Trust's duty of care, or any negligence on the part of its employees.

The Research Councils reserve the right to terminate the grant at any time, subject to reasonable notice and to any payment that may be necessary to cover outstanding and unavoidable commitments.

If a grant is terminated, no liability for payment or redundancy or any other compensatory payment for the dismissal of staff funded by the grant will be accepted, but, subject to the provisions of RG 16, negotiations will be held with regard to other contractual commitments and concerning the disposal of assets acquired under the research grant.

## **RG 25 Status**

These terms and conditions will be governed by the laws of England and Wales; all matters relating to the terms and conditions will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

If any provision of these terms and conditions is found by a court or other legitimate body to be illegal, invalid or unreasonable, it will not affect the remaining terms and conditions which will continue in force.

These terms and conditions, together with any additional conditions set out in the grant, contain the whole agreement between the Research Council and the Research Organisation in relation to the stated research grant. The Research Council and the Research Organisation do not intend that any of these terms and conditions should be enforceable by any third party.