

Natural Environment Research Council Follow-On Fund Application Form Guidance Notes

Please read these guidance notes before completing and submitting an application to the Follow-on Fund. These notes are for guidance in applying to NERC's Follow-on Fund only. Additional information can be found in NERC's grants handbook and in the online help text in Je-S.

1. Application form notes

Applications to the NERC Follow-on Fund must be made through [Je-S](#). Select 'standard grants' and then 'Follow-on Fund (FEC)'

There should be a number of supporting documents submitted with the application form as attachments. These should be a minimum font size of 12 point Arial or Times New Roman.

1.1 Case for Support

This must be no more than 6 sides of A4 and should be structured as detailed below:

a) Technical Development Plan (no more than 3 sides of A4)

Give a description of the proposed project work, outline the work to be carried out and provide milestones where appropriate

b) Commercial Development Plan (no more than 3 sides of A4)

Outline a plausible commercialisation strategy for the business idea.

Applicants should be aware that the following criteria are used to assess the applications and so may wish to address these aspects in the case for support

- **Scientific quality:** research to be conducted under follow-on funds must be sound research, originating from a scientifically excellent programme or grant
- **Commercial potential:** the commercial potential of the idea including: potential benefits to customers, market need (size of market, geographic spread and potential value, nature of competition, any gaps in knowledge), IPR position and strategy etc. Input from potential licensees/investors should be identified;
- **Quality of the development plan, including clear objectives and milestones (both technical and commercial):** the plan must identify a plausible commercialisation strategy for the business idea and include evidence of how the project will be managed, including identification of milestones;
- **Added Value:** the application must describe how follow-on funding will enhance the prospect of commercialisation and/or increase the value of the technology. There must be evidence to indicate that the project is cost effective and that funding is likely to render commercialisation more probable, or with the prospect of significantly greater exploitation value attributed to the technology, as a consequence of the follow-on project and in a cost effective manner.

Lists of references should be included in the six page limit of the description of the project and should not be submitted as additional documents

1.2 Letter of support

A letter of support from the institution's Technology Transfer Office or equivalent must be included. The letter should detail any support already provided and how the Technology Transfer Office intends to support the applicant if successful. Applicants should note that significant attention is paid to Technology Transfer Office support during the assessment process, statements should be specific to the proposed project and should demonstrate real buy-in from the office.

See also the more detailed guidance notes for Technology Transfer Offices that accompany this Call.

1.3 Workplan

A workplan in the form of a Gantt chart or similar must be attached. This should include details of the main milestones and target dates for the proposed Follow-on Fund project.

1.4 Additional Documentation

You may also include the following as additional attachments to the application

- A description of the research track record of the investigators and any named staff. (Maximum of 2 sides of A4 in total);
- Equipment quotes are required for single items of equipment over £25,000 (no limit on page length);
- Additional letters of support can be submitted, including a letter from Project Partners (no limit on page length).

2. Confidentiality

NERC take all reasonable steps to ensure that the contents of Follow-on Fund applications are treated as **confidential**. All members of assessment panels will sign a non-disclosure agreement. Applicants must obtain the necessary clearances from collaborators with a commercial interest in the content of the application.

Applicants must ensure that the title and summary of the proposed project are worded in such a way as to protect commercially confidential or sensitive areas, as project summaries and personal data from the first page of successful Follow-on Fund applications will normally be transferred to publicly available databases. The following details will be transferred for all funded projects:

- title and project summary
- institution
- name(s) of applicant(s)
- name of any project partners
- the value of the award
- start and end dates and duration of the award

NERC must be notified in writing at the application stage if applicants do not wish personal data or information that could affect Intellectual Property Rights to be transferred to the databases.

Applicants abide by the principles of good scientific practice.

The NERC will use information provided on the proposal form in processing the proposal, any grant awarded and subsequent payment, including maintenance and review processes. This includes:

- registration of proposals;
- operation of NERC grants processing and management information systems;
- the acquisition of UK and possibly international referee comments on the proposal;
- the preparation of material for use by peer review panels;
- statistical analysis to inform the evaluation of the quality of the research undertaken and to study demographic trends;
- policy and strategy studies.

Contact the NERC Data Protection Officer for further information (Lorraine Partridge, 01793 411766, lpart@nerc.ac.uk).