

Follow-on Fund Pathfinder Scheme: Guidance for applicants

These notes are guidance for those applying to NERC's **Follow-on Fund Pathfinder scheme** only – applicants to the **main** Follow-on Fund should read the guidance notes that relate to that particular scheme.

Application process

Applications to the NERC Follow-on Fund Pathfinder scheme must be made through [Je-S](#).

- Select 'standard grants' and then 'Follow-on Fund (FEC).'
- In 'Edit project details' select 'Follow-on Fund Pathfinder' under Type.

Please notify NERC's Swindon Office KT team on the day of submission at knowledge@nerc.ac.uk. This is vital to ensure immediate processing of the application.

Additional guidance notes are provided in the online Je-S help and guidance section.

Duration

The duration should not be more than 6 months.

Eligible funds

Typical award values are expected in the region of £7-10k (FEC) of which NERC will pay the standard 80% proportion. In exceptional circumstances, up to £20k can be sought.

Case for support

Please outline the work to be carried out in a case for support. This should be no longer than two A4 pages. The case should include details of what **commercialisation work** you envisage, and how the funds will improve understanding and could be of benefit in producing a future full Follow-on Fund application. We recommend you pay attention to how you anticipate Pathfinder funding guiding future commercialisation work.

For proposals where funds are sought for the first milestone work, you should include information about further milestones that will build on this if successful; this can be provided in the form of a Gantt chart or an equivalent.

Letter of support

A letter of support must be provided from the Technology Transfer Office (or equivalent) detailing why the proposed work is needed. They should include details of any matched funding they will provide to support the activity and any additional support that might add value to the work.

Additional supporting documentation

Anticipated milestones for future work can be included as a Gantt chart or similar to demonstrate why particular work is needed and how it fits within an overall work plan for commercialising the research outcomes.

Confidentiality

NERC takes 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 be transferred to publicly available databases.

The following details will be transferred for all funded projects:

- title and project summary (abstract)
- 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

Applicants must 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).