

## **NERC Call for Partnership Research Grants**

### **Guidance to applicants**

#### **Aim**

This scheme aims to support collaborative research activities between academic researchers and partners in public or private sector organisations.

NERC has updated the requirements for this scheme – project partners are no longer required to match the funds sought from NERC (December 2007 round onwards). **The total project partner contribution must now be a minimum of 25% of the total full economic cost of the project.** Further information about this can be seen below in ‘Partner contributions’.

#### **Background**

NERC seeks to increase collaborative research in order to help the transfer of knowledge gained in research to users. The Partnership Research Grant scheme enables NERC to support both academic-private sector and academic-public sector collaborative research. It is managed through the NERC standard research grant mechanism. NERC will not provide additional resources to help build partnerships; applicants must build these relationships before applying.

#### **Scope of call**

Applications must fall within the NERC science remit (for details, see <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/researchgrants/>).

Partnership Research Grants provide funding for research where the collaborating body is able to provide co-funding in cash, and/or in kind equal to or exceeding 25% of the full economic costs of the proposal.

#### **Eligibility**

Applicants must be eligible under standard NERC Responsive funding criteria (for details, see the NERC Research Grants Handbook: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/researchgrants/>).

Organisations eligible to apply as applicants to this scheme are not eligible as the project partner (see <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/eligibility.htm>)

#### **Collaborating partners**

Partners may be:

- Private sector companies (non-UK companies must be able to demonstrate a significant presence in the UK);
- Public sector organisations including local, regional and national authorities, regulators, non-departmental public bodies, non-governmental organisations and charities.

### **Size of awards**

Partnership Research Grants usually provide funding for up to three years, although applications for grants for longer periods will be accepted. There is no maximum financial limit, but the total value of the directly incurred costs must be no less than £25k. NERC will pay the standard proportion of full economic costs (currently 80%).

**The total full economic cost of the project should be stated at the top of the justification of resources page.**

Awards will be made in the form of a standard research grant.

### **Partner contributions**

Project partner contributions (either in cash or in kind) must equal a minimum of 25% of the full economic cost of the work.

**To calculate the project partner (PP) contribution required, firstly determine the full economic cost of the project as a whole. Use 25% of this value as the minimum cash or in-kind contribution required from the project partner.**

Examples:

Total cost of work (£)	Amount sought from NERC (£)	80% amount NERC will pay (£)	Minimum PP contribution (£)
400,000	300,000	240,000	100,000
240,000	180,000	144,000	60,000

Partner contributions should be entered in the project partner section of the application form. In kind contributions should be clearly detailed and an explanation of how valuations are derived should be provided in accompanying letters of support from partners. Each project partner must provide a detailed letter of support (see below). Resources that are already in the public domain and/or originally funded through NERC support, and discounted equipment costs cannot count towards the partner contribution.

### **Pathways to Impact**

Partnership Research grants submitted to NERC must be accompanied by an a Pathways to Impact document (for more information, see: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/pathwaystoimpact.asp>).

### **Assessment**

Applications will be assessed alongside standard grant applications (although are not in direct competition with them for funds) and are subjected to an initial review (<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/assessment/>) that determines which proposals will go forward for external review. Academic experts and

representatives from the science user community (public and private sector) will be involved in the assessment process.

NERC seeks to fund the best science and all research projects are assessed in terms of scientific excellence. Partnership Research Grants also seek to support genuine collaborations and interactions between researchers and users of research. Therefore, in addition to science excellence, attention will be paid to the value added by the collaboration and clear tangible evidence of project partner involvement.

### **Letters of support**

A letter of support must be provided for each project partner listed on the application form. The letter should clearly detail the contributions of the project partner and identify the relevance of the proposed work to them, as well as the nature of the collaboration and their involvement in the research (if at all).

### **Intellectual property**

All intellectual property arising from the project will be subject to the same conditions as NERC standard research grants (as detailed in the NERC Research Grants Handbook). Ownership and responsibility for the exploitation of intellectual property rests with the host institution (grant recipient). In the case of applications from NERC employees, intellectual property rests with NERC. However, in the case of collaborative research ownership of any intellectual property should be agreed and clearly set out in a collaboration agreement prior to any work commencing. Any award offer is conditional upon NERC receiving a copy of a fully signed collaboration agreement between the partners within **six months** of the issue of an award letter and in advance of a project starting. If this condition is not met the award offer will be withdrawn automatically.

#### **Collaboration Agreements – information provided as a guide only:**

The collaboration agreement should be a simple document recording the main items of agreement between the partners in a project and **must be signed by all the partners**. It will ideally seek to cover the following:

- the terms of the collaboration between the partners and the mechanisms for managing the project;
- the basis for ownership and licensing of intellectual property;
- provisions for confidentiality, including any mechanisms for agreeing publication of results and dissemination of information to third parties;
- financial arrangements between partners;
- arrangements between the lead partner and the other partners to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the funding.

Applicants are advised to seek professional assistance with the drawing up of a collaborative agreement and should consult initially with experts in their own institution.

Further information is also available from the NERC website at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/business/commercial/intellectualproperty.asp>

NERC Data Centres 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/research/sites/data/policy.asp>

### **How to submit an application**

All 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 [www.rcuk.ac.uk/je-s/](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.

When completing a Je-S application:

- Select Scheme: **Partnership Research Grant**
- Project partner contributions should be detailed in either the **Project Partner** or the **JGS** (for JGS contributions only) section of the Je-S application (and **not** under **Other Support**)
- Named project partners must provide detailed **letters of support** that shall be attached to the application. 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 kind should be detailed.
- Applications can also be made through the Research Councils / MOD Joint Grants Scheme (JGS) (using the Je-S application system).

All other entries and conditions will be as for NERC Standard Research Grants following the Je-S on-line help guide and the NERC Research Grants Handbook: <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/application/researchgrants/>

### **Closing date**

The closing date for applications is **16.00 on 01 July and 01 December** each year.

### **Contacts**

If you have any questions about this scheme or any other forms of collaborative research activity please contact **Andrew Richardson** ([ajri@nerc.ac.uk](mailto:ajri@nerc.ac.uk); 01793 411526)