Announcement of Opportunity

Part B: Applying for ESPA 2016 Grants

Critical Deadlines:

Full proposals to be submitted via Je-S
by **16:00 (4pm) UK Local Time (GMT+1/UCT+1), 17 May 2016**

Information about your application, including the personal information provided on the forms, will be processed and stored electronically by the ESPA Secretariat, Directorate and representatives of ESPA's Funders (NERC, ESRC and DFID). The Information contained in your application may be passed on to external reviewers in confidence. Reviewers will be asked to destroy information after the review and selection process is complete.

Your application and personal information will be stored by the ESPA programme for management purposes but will not be shared with other organisations outside the ESPA partnership. We will only use details provided in the application for correspondence about the call. In order to take advantage of all ESPA online services, including our partnerships service to link with other researchers and users of research, you will need to register to join the ESPA Global Forum on our website.

By submitting your application to the ESPA Programme you have indicated your acceptance of these data protection terms and conditions.

Summary

The ESPA-2016 Grants call is for research synthesis projects designed to significantly advance global understanding on the way that ecosystem services contribute to poverty alleviation. The call will fund a set of projects that build upon the scientific advances and evidence generated by [ESPA projects](). ESPA-2016 projects will use ESPA research, knowledge and frameworks as a starting point but researchers will be required to extend their analysis more widely to consider all other relevant research evidence from the perspective of ESPA's aims and approach. This requires interdisciplinary studies considering the links between a range of ecosystem services and multiple dimensions of poverty.

Applications are invited for funding in the range of between **£50,000 and £200,000 GBP Full Economic Cost (FEC)**. This call has been allocated a total available budget of up to £1 million GBP, which may be revised at the discretion of the Programme Executive Board (PEB). Projects will be funded for a **maximum duration of 12 months**, with an expected start date between 1 September 2016 and 1 December 2016. **Projects will not be able to postpone their start date to later than 1 December 2016.** All other standard NERC guidelines will apply.

Submission is a one stage process using standard NERC procedures for research proposals. Applications can be started on the Je-S system from 8 March 2016.

Full Proposals must be submitted via JeS **by 16:00 GMT+1 /UCT+1 on 17 May 2016**

Table of Contents

Abbreviations

AO	Announcement of Opportunity
CO-I	Co-Investigator
CV	Curriculum Vitae/Resume
DFID	Department for International Development
ESPA	Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FAQ	Frequently asked questions
FEC	Full Economic Cost
GBP	Great British Pound
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
Je-S	Joint Electronic Submission System
LIC	Low-income country
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
PEB	Programme Executive Board
PI	Principal Investigator
RCUK	Research Councils UK
UTC	Coordinated Universal Time

Change Log

All potential applicants are strongly encouraged to register to receive the ESPA Directorate's mailing list and newsletter. Any important information relating to the call during the first stage of the proposal process will be publicised via the Directorate's mailing list.

Date	Section	Page	Detail

Summary of the Application Process

Overview

1. This call has one stage, which comprises the submission of a full proposal through the Je-S Online application platform.

2. All proposals will then be reviewed, graded and ranked by an Assessment Panel.

3. The Assessment Panel will recommend a subset of applications for funding, and the final funding decision will be made by ESPA's Programme Executive Board.

Full Proposal Stage

Overview

4. The ESPA 2016 Grants will provide funding of between £50,000 and £200,000 GBP Full Economic Cost (FEC).

5. This call has been allocated a total available budget of £1 million GBP, which may be revised subject to the discretion of the Programme Executive board (PEB).

6. Projects will be funded for a maximum duration of 12 months, with an expected start date between 1 September 2016 and 1 December 2016. **Projects will not be able to postpone their start date to later than 1 December 2016.** In administration of the grants, all other standard NERC guidelines will apply.

7. Full proposals will need to be submitted through the [Joint Electronic Submission system](.).

8. Applicants can begin submission of their applications on the Je-S System from **8 March 2016.** Prior to this date, the call will not appear on the Je-S System.

9. In order to be named on a proposal, all applicants must register for an account on Je-S.

10. Applicants may submit their proposals as a single Je-S application, or a joint application; submissions of joint applications should be 'linked' on Je-S by using the unique reference number given to you (contact the [Je-S helpdesk](.) for further advice).

11. ESPA will award funds to the lead institution named on each application, which will then be responsible for disbursing funds to other institutions/organisations named on that application.

12. UK based organisations cannot be named on an application that is led by a non-UK organisation, and in this case, it will be necessary to submit a joint application.

Summary of Required Documents

13. The application has several elements. Information for the pro-forma can be prepared offline and entered onto the online form. All other documents can be completed offline before being uploaded as attachments to the Je-S form.

14. The pro-forma is an online form comprising a number of structured boxes for key information. It is common to all applications, and for joint applications this will need to be completed by **all** of the components.

15. The elements summarised below should be completed off-line and uploaded as attachments to the Je-S form. They are described in more detail later in the document and are summarised below:

    - The Case for Support is comprised of two parts:

I. Previous Track Record of organisations – up to 2 sides A4. This section includes brief information and assurances of the organisational and financial competencies, if applicable; see page 11. (Common to all proposals in a joint application – submitted by lead only).

II. Description of proposed research - up to 8 sides A4; see page 11. *(Common to all proposals in a joint application – submitted by lead only)*

- Data Management Plan – 1 page A4 this section includes information about how the project will manage data produced and submit this to the relevant centres and Directorate; see page 12. (*Common to all proposals in a joint application - submitted by lead only*).

- Justification of Resources requested – up to 2 sides A4 for each component application; see page 13. (Submitted by each individual application)

- Pathways to Impact attachment – up to 2 sides A4 (see section 4.7); see page 13. *(Common to all proposals in a joint application -submitted by lead only)*.

- CVs for all named research staff: PIs, Co-Is, Researcher Co-Is, named Researchers and Visiting Researchers (up to 2 sides A4 for each CV, and should include current and previous positions, key publications and research funding obtained); see page 14. It is recommended that CVs use a consistent template within projects.

- Letters of support from any named Project Partners – up to 2 sides A4 each; see page 14. *(Common to all proposals in a joint application -submitted by lead only)*.

- Application forms for any NERC Facility requested.

Please note that on submission to council ALL non PDF documents are converted to PDF, the use of non-standard fonts may result in errors or font conversion, which could affect the overall length of the document.

Additionally where non-standard fonts are present, and even if the converted PDF document may look unaffected in the Je-S System, when it is imported into the Research Councils Grants System some information may be removed. We therefore recommend that where a document contains any non-standard fonts (scientific notation, diagrams etc), the document should be converted to PDF prior to attaching it to the proposal.

> **All applications must be submitted in English and costed in pounds sterling (£/GBP)**
>
> **All attachments (including embedded references and footnotes) must be submitted using single-spaced typescript of minimum font size 11 point Arial font or other sans serif typeface of equivalent size to Arial 11, with margins of at least 2 cm. Page limit restrictions apply and should be adhered to. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in rejection of your application.**

Je-S pro-forma

16. In order to prepare a Je-S proposal submission, the person preparing the proposal has to log onto Je-S and create a new proposal. Note that this person must have previously created an individual Je-S account for themselves. **This can be done at any time, and should be done well in advance of the application deadline as there may be some delay in the approval of an individual's Je-S account.**

17. Full step-by-step guidance on how to complete a Je-S application form can be found on the [Je-S website](#).

18. On logging into Je-S, there are two procedures you can follow:

    (A) Click on 'Documents', then create a 'New Document'
    - Click on 'Call Search' and enter 'ESPA'.
    - This will bring up the link to the current ESPA call – ESPA May 2016.

    (B) Select the Research Council – NERC.
    - Select Document type 'Standard Proposal'
    - Select Scheme - 'Directed - International'.
    - Select call 'ESPA May 2016'

19. Please note that applications submitted to the wrong call cannot be considered. Please ensure that you have selected the current ESPA call, entitled ESPA May 2016, for all components of a joint proposal.

20. The following information should be common to all application pro-formas in a joint project proposal:
    - Title of proposal
    - Objectives
    - Summary
    - Academic Beneficiaries

21. Some information is common to the whole project but if you submit a joint proposal, the following should **only** be included in the lead Research Organisation application pro forma and submitted as attachments to the **lead Research Organisation application only.** These are:
    1. Nominated referees
    2. Project Partners
    3. Letters of support from Project Partners
    4. Case for support.
    5. Data Management Plan (up to 1 side A4).
    6. Justification of Resources (up to 2 sides A4).
    7. Pathways to Impact (up to 1 side A4).

22. The attachments named in point 21 above must <u>not</u> be attached to any component application.

23. For each other component application (if submitting a joint proposal), we require as separate attachments, or in the relevant pro-forma, the following.
    - CVs for named research staff (including PIs, co-Is and Researcher Co-Investigators) and Visiting Researchers named on that component application (up to 2 sides A4 for each CV).These should be attached to the relevant component Research Organisation application.

24. Applicants should include information of Project Partners listed individually within their pro-forma, and any in-kind and or leveraged support that has been secured for the proposal.

Project Finances

25. The financial cost of the proposed project should be identified through the following components:
    - Je-S pro-forma
    - justification of resources document

26. All applicants should enter the 100% full economic costs of the proposed research into the budget sections of the Je-S form. **All costs should be in pounds sterling (£).**

27. The budget limits on grant applications under this scheme refer to the total cost of the project – **FEC**. All of the UK Research Councils research grant applications are awarded on an FEC basis.

28. For Projects which choose to submit a joint application (i.e. more than one component application into Je-S), the Full Economic Cost of all submitted applications comprising the project **combined** must not exceed the maximum budget of £200,000, or indeed be less than the lower limit of £50,000. *Note, for example, that if each of two component applications claims £50,000 in costs on their application, this would show on our system as the project bidding for £100,000.*

29. Research grant funds are provided to meet the costs incurred by the specific research project. Funds may not be used to meet costs on any other project or activity. All costs associated with the project must be itemised and fully justified (This should be done in the 'Justification of Resources' document (see page 13).

30. Requested funds will be scrutinised during the assessment process, and if recommended for funding, NERC, on behalf of the ESPA Programme Executive Board (PEB), will request adequate evidence of the costing basis for all direct and indirect costs. Note that budgets may be reduced if considered excessive.

31. Successful projects, along with proposing excellent science research that fits the objectives and scope of this call, are expected to also provide excellent value for money. This includes fully justified and reasonable financial requests, appropriate time commitments of all research participants, and clear plans which aim to provide the maximum output of science excellence and impact from the monies requested.

32. ESPA funding is available for eligible UK and non-UK organisations, if they are to receive funding directly.

33. The UK Research Councils, which includes NERC and ESRC, are able to provide funding for UK organisations that are recognised as eligible to receive UK Research Council funding, including UK Higher Education Institutes (HEI's) and other recognised Independent Research Organisations (IROs). For a list of organisations that are eligible to receive NERC and ESRC funding see the RCUK website

34. Organisations that are currently ineligible to receive funding directly from UK Research Councils may still be eligible to apply for and receive funding from ESPA, if they meet the organisation eligibility criteria on page 15. This funding will be covered by DFID's contribution to ESPA.

35. Further information regarding the financial conditions applicable to these grants can be found in Annex 2.

36. Further Guidance on fund headings are provided in Annex 2.

UK Organisation Budgets

37. UK organisations will receive **80% of the full economic cost (FEC)** of the project, as per standard Research Council funding rules.

38. UK universities are required to calculate the FEC using the "TRAC" (Transparent Approach to Costing) methodology. Non-university organisations are not expected to use the (TRAC) methodology, but Research Councils require a validation process to ensure that non-university costing methodologies are robust. For Research Council Institutes, validation will be by the host Research Council. [Default rates](#) are available for use if non-university research organisations are unable to demonstrate that their costing methodologies are robust.

39. Overseas travel and expenses costs incurred by members of UK institutions will be paid at 80% and must be included as costs related to that UK institution (not included as costs relating to an overseas organisation).

40. All applicants should enter the full economic costs of the proposed research into the budget sections of the Je-S form, as per normal Research Council applications. **All costs should be in pounds sterling (£).**

Non-UK Organisation Budgets

41. Non-UK organisations are expected to be able to comply with full and transparent costing for budget elements.

42. Non-UK organisations will be supported at **100% FEC for the direct costs** of the research.

43. In addition, indirect costs (including estates costs) may be charged on staff salary and other staff-related costs (i.e. statutory contributions analogous to UK National Insurance or Superannuation contributions).

44. Overheads may not be charged on non-staff related direct costs, e.g. equipment, travel and subsistence, consultancies, conferences, etc.

45. The following rates for indirect costs should be applied:
    - for applicants from **low and middle income** countries, the rate is **50%** (a list of developing countries for the purpose of this costing regime is available in Annex 1);
    - for applicants from **high income** countries, the rate is **20%**.

    For further guidance on what overhead budgets can be used for please see Annex 2.

46. Non-UK organisation should **not** enter any costs in the 'Estates' section of Je-S. All overheads should be entered as an 'Other Directly Incurred cost' on Je-S.

47. In order to mark costs as payable at 100%, applicants should tick the '**Exceptions'** box under the relevant category in Je-S.

48. **If an application involves costs from both UK and non-UK organisations**, they should be entered as separate items. For example T&S costs for field work should be entered as two separate lines, i.e. that related to UK organisations payable at 80%, and that related to non-UK organisations, which will be payable at 100% by ticking the 'exceptions' box within the Je-S form.

49. All applicants are advised to consult their institutional finance officers when completing the financial parts of the application.

Case for Support

50. The Case for Support should include the following two components: Track Record and Description of Proposed Research. These components should be uploaded as a single attachment on Je-S by the lead applicant.

Track record

51. The Track record should be a maximum of **2 sides of A4**.

52. This section should include a brief outline of the organisations involved in the proposal, as named on the component applications, and address the following aspects.

- It should include details on the nature of the organisations named (i.e. university, research institute, NGO, etc).

- Importantly, the track record should concentrate on the key named individuals/researchers, their role in the project and details of relevant experience and how they are best suited to conduct the research proposed. You may also wish to include details of any external funding held for key individuals and their organisations, and details of any relevant past collaborative work with other beneficiaries should also be given.

- For non-UK organisations or UK organisations not normally eligible for Research Council funding (see RCUK website for guidance), the track record should also include brief information and assurances of the **organisational and financial competencies** of the organisation.

- Indicate where your previous work has contributed to progressing the field of research, and/or providing impact.

- Outline the specific expertise available for the research at the host organisation and that of any associated organisations and beneficiaries.

The Description of Proposed Research

53. The Description of Proposed Research should be a maximum of **8 sides of A4.**

54. The Description of Proposed Research included in the Case for Support contains the substance of the research application. It is essential that a coherent exposition of the proposed project is presented, addressing the intellectual and academic case and potential for impact on the ESPA research agenda.

55. As well as meeting the core criteria of the call (see Part A), The Description of Proposed research should address the following points:

- Underlying rationale, scientific, technological, social and developmental issues to be addressed. This should cover the research question and objectives and highlight the overarching policy questions/evidence challenges that will be addressed.

- Specific objectives, hypotheses and research questions of the project, including their potential relevance to UK and international research work in the field, relevance to the ESPA vision and anticipated achievements and outputs, including datasets.

- Methodology and approach; this should include methods of data collection (as appropriate), and details on the use and manipulation of data.

- 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 and the management structure within the project team.

- Any associated collaborations, partnerships or co-funding (either proposed or secured) that may be used in the project.

56. Applicants are advised that they should pay attention to the environmental implications of their research. The ESPA Programme Executive Board will consider funding the cost of low-carbon approaches to collaboration (including, where appropriate, the costs of technology or of less economic, but more environmentally friendly means of transport). Note that ESPA will apply the Research Council policy on carbon offsetting which currently states that projects may not claim the cost of offsetting carbon emissions arising from travel associated with research grants. Institutions may choose to use their own resources to cover such costs if required by their environmental policy. Where the project has control documents, reports and paper outputs, these should be printed on paper made from sustainably managed forests and/or recycled paper.

Data Management Plan

57. The Data Management Plan should not exceed **1 side A4** and should be submitted by the lead applicant only.

58. The Data Management Plan should include a detailed description of the proposed data management structures, plans and responsibilities.

59. Four issues should be addressed in the Outline Data Management Plan:

a. Data management procedures to be followed during the lifetime of the grant. Consider issues like:

- metadata - will you document discovery (what, where, when, why, who) and descriptive (how collected, how processed, how stored, how linked) metadata?

- data storage – have you access to enough storage and backup? Will you need specialist help with database design?

- data quality - will there be an earmarked data manager within the team, what data quality checks will be used, will student data be integrated in the data plan?

- ethical and access issues – are there special data security or licencing issues and how will you address these?

b. Existing datasets to be used by the grant (comment on any restrictions on reuse)

c. Datasets likely to be created by the grant which will be made available to the Funder's Data Centre(s) at the end of the Grant; projects will need to speak to the ESPA Directorate once funded as they will help projects with their data management processes.

d. Planned release dates of the data (data should normally be deposited within a datacentre within 2 years of collection), and identification of the possible user types who may want to use the data you produce.

60. **Please note,** the entire Case for Support and Data Management Plan for successful proposals will be made available to the NERC Environmental Data Centres and,

where appropriate, used by them to draft, in collaboration with the Principal Investigator, a full Data Management Plan (DMP). This full DMP should be mutually agreed between the Data Centre and the Principal Investigator within three months of the start date of the grant. 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 to use.

61. Applicants should refer to the ESPA guidance on data management for information on open access to data.

Justification of Resources

62. Justification of Resources should not exceed **2 sides A4**. This document is submitted by **the lead component only.**

63. The Justification of Resources must be uploaded on Je-S as part of the application.

64. This should state the full cost of the project and explain why the requested resources are needed, including identifying why the proposal presents value for money. It should include justification for all Directly Incurred Costs, Investigator effort, use of pool staff resources and any access to shared facilities and equipment being sought.

65. No justification of Directly Allocated Estates and Indirect Costs is required.

66. It is not sufficient merely to list what is being requested. Where you do not provide sufficient justification for any item, it may be cut from any award made. In short, **you must demonstrate why you are requesting the funds** you are, and how they will be used to deliver the cutting edge research with impact that you are proposing.

67. Please note that if successful, the amount awarded to a project is limited to the amount requested at the time of application, and the final award amount agreed by the funders. This will not be increased at any time due to changes in the global financial markets. Therefore applicants should set out how they will deal with any changing currency fluctuations that may occur during the duration of their project and the possible impact this may have on the plan of work.

68. An example of a well-written Justification of Resources can be found on the NERC website. Guidance on what should be included is also available in the Je-S helptext.

69. It is not expected that ESPA 2016 projects should require large items of equipment.

Pathways to Impact

70. The 'pathways to impact' attachment should not exceed **2 sides of A4.**

71. All applicants are required to include a '**Pathways to Impact'** attachment as part of their research proposal that describes how the proposed work will achieve impact and build capacity. Applicants should refer to Part A for further information referring to ESPA's Impact Strategy and guidance on Theory of Change.

72. There are many potential ways for research from ESPA-2016 projects to deliver academic (conceptual) or development impact. For this reason, the programme is not being prescriptive in terms of expectations from projects and applicants are required to use their pathway to impact statement to:

(a) describe the type and significance of potential impact(s) that could be derived from the project and
(b) describe what the project will do in order to promote the achievement of that impact.

73. Any funds necessary to deliver any activities outlined in the Pathways to Impact attachment must be included as part as the overall costs for the programme of work

74. In addition to the Pathways to Impact activities developed by individual projects, it should also be noted that ESPA may wish to fund additional outreach activities involving one or more projects in order to increase the impact of their research outcomes. All grant holders will be expected to cooperate with the Programme Executive Board (PEB) and/or ESPA Directorate in contributing to the wider ESPA programme of knowledge sharing, uptake and communication activities, and will also be expected to represent the scheme and their project through involvement, where appropriate, in third-party events.

75. All projects will be required to work as part of the wider ESPA community and to participate in the ESPA Global Forum organised by the Directorate (including attendance at the ESPA Annual Conference). Projects will need to cover their own costs (including staff time) for participation in these activities and **must allocate ~3% of their budget** to this.

76. **RCUK and DFID have recently adopted new policies on open access publication**:

    - It is now required that **all publications be open access**. ESPA expects that all academic journal publications be open access, and where possible this should include books and book chapters.

    - The ESPA Secretariat will provide further supplemental guidance on how projects will be expected to pay for open access publication if they are outside of the designated UK HEIs covered by the new policies.

CVs

77. CVs are required for all named research staff: PIs, Co-Is, Researcher Co-Is, named Researchers and Visiting Researchers.

78. Up to **2 sides A4** are allowed for each CV, and should include current and previous positions, key publications and research funding obtained.

79. It is recommended that CVs use a consistent template within each project.

Letters of Support

80. Each Project Partner must provide a detailed signed letter of support of up to **2 sides of A4**.

81. The letter of support should confirm the organisation's commitment to the proposed project, identify the value, relevance and possible benefits of the proposed work to the partner, the period of support, the full nature of the collaboration and how the partner will be involved in the project and provide added value.

82. Partner contributions, whether in cash or in kind, should be explained in detail in the case for support, including the equivalent value of any in-kind contributions.

83. The letter should be written when the proposal is being prepared and targeted specifically to the project.

Je-S Registration

Registering an organisation on Je-S

84. If your organisation is already registered on the Je-S system, you do not need to re-register. However, if this is your first application for funding, you should follow the steps in Annex 3 to ensure that your organisation is registered on Je-S.

Registering as an Individual on Je-S

85. All individuals that will be named on an application (with the exception of Project Partners and subcontractors) must create an individual Je-S account for themselves in order to be added to an application. See online Je-S helptext guidance on how to register on Je-S. It is necessary for an individual's organisation to have been registered before they can register themselves.

86. If you have registered as an individual with Je-S through a previous call, you will not need to do so again.

Organisation Eligibility

Overview

87. Most UK higher education institutions and some other independent UK research organisations are already eligible to apply for, and hold, UK Research Council grants. Details on which UK organisations are currently eligible for Research Council funding can be found on the RCUK website

88. ESPA will fund non-UK and other UK organisations where these are found to be eligible.

Research Roles and eligibility

Overview

89. All research applicants must ensure that they accurately define their roles within the grant so that there is no confusion at later stages of the process.

90. With the exception of project partners and 'staff' such as researchers and technicians, individuals may be named on a maximum of two ESPA 2016 Grants submitted, and may be named as a lead Principal Investigator (PI) on only one. The total time commitment across the applications with which they are involved should not exceed 100%. If individuals are named on more than two submitted proposals then additional proposals will be rejected, which may be to the detriment of both the individual and projects concerned.

91. Full information on individual eligibility and role descriptions can be found under Section C (pages 14 to 18) of the NERC Grants Handbook.

Including Project Studentships on a proposal

Overview

92. Project studentships (either Masters or PhD studentships) **cannot** be added to ESPA 2016 grants

Submitting your proposal

Overview

93. Applications must be completed in full before final submission. The Je-S system has a validation procedure which will identify mandatory sections that have not been completed. An exception to this is for any 'Other Attachments', so **applicants must ensure for themselves** that any such documents have been included.

94. Changes to the Je-S registration process mean that for certain schemes, such as ESPA, any organisations that are not currently Je-S registered, may self-register their organisation (see Annex 3). For these self-registering organisations there is no need to establish a submitter pool. Therefore these applicants can submit the application directly to the Council (NERC).

95. However, please note that for organisations that are already Je-S registered, your application will be routed through your existing submitter route. Therefore when a researcher submits his or her application, a message will be sent to their host organisation's designated 'submitter', who must then complete the submission process to Council.

96. Thus, there is a further layer of administration between the researcher submitting the application and it being received by the NERC, via Je-S. This layer of administration is at the applicant's host institution, and the NERC cannot accept responsibility for any delays which may occur as a consequence. The process can be shown as: Applicant → (Approver →) Submitter (within the applicant's institution) → NERC.

    Note: each component application comprising a joint proposal will need to go through the same submission process. The PI on the lead application should ensure that all joint application components have submitted their part of the joint proposal.

> **If all applications are not FULLY submitted by the deadline, i.e. all component parts from all PI/coPIs, they will not be accepted.**
>
> **The deadline for all Je-S research applications to this call is 16:00 (4pm) UK Local Time (GMT+1/UCT+1), 17 May 2016**

97. Applications can only be accepted by electronic submission in the manner indicated on the form and accompanying guidance notes, and it must be clear and unambiguous that **full** submission took place prior to the deadline.

98. Electronic acknowledgements will be sent to the lead Principal Investigator and submitting organisation from the Je-S system.

99. Applicants must ensure they know whether their application will be routed through a submitter pool. If you registered on Je-S from 2011 onwards, the ESPA programme included the facility of not needing a submitter pool. We strongly advise that you

check with Je-S whether or not you need your host institution to submit your completed application on your behalf. You can check this in Je-S by opening your Je-S application and selecting 'Document Actions' at the top and then 'Show submission Path'.

100. We strongly advise applicants whose applications will be routed through a submitter pool to secure confirmation from their relevant administrator that the application has been submitted successfully to NERC.

Summary of Requirements

Full Proposals

Summary of Requirements for Single Application

Document Type	Required	As necessary	Number limit
Title of proposal (pro forma)	✓		150 characters
Type of proposal (pro forma)	✓		n/a
Objectives (pro forma)	✓		4000 characters
Summary (pro forma)	✓		4000 characters
Academic Beneficiaries (pro forma)	✓		4000 characters
Impact Summary (pro forma)	✓		4000 characters
Nominated referees (pro forma)		✓	Max 4
Project Partners (pro forma)		✓	No limit
Facility (pro forma)		✓	n/a
Previous Track Record (Part 1 of the Case for Support).	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Description of Proposed Research (Part 2 of the Case for Support)	✓		Max 8 sides A4
Data Management Plan	✓		Max 1 sides A4
Justification of Resources	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Pathways to Impact	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Letters of support from Project Partners		✓	Max 2 sides A4 each
CVs for named research staff and Visiting Researchers from all component Research Organisations	✓		Max 2 sides A4 each
CVs for all Principal and Co-I Investigators from all component Research Organisations	✓		Max 2 sides A4 each

Summary of Requirements for Joint Applications

Document Type	Common to all proposals	Submitted by Lead Only	Submitted by Individual components	Number limit
Title of proposal (pro forma)	✓		✓	150 characters
Type of proposal (pro forma)	✓		✓	n/a
Objectives (pro forma)	✓		✓	4000 characters
Summary (pro forma)	✓		✓	4000 characters
Academic Beneficiaries (pro forma)	✓		✓	4000 characters
Impact Summary (pro forma)	✓		✓	4000 characters
Nominated referees (pro forma)		✓		Max 4
Project Partners (pro forma)	✓	✓		No limit
Facility (pro forma)			✓	n/a
Previous Track Record (Part 1 of the Case for Support).	✓	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Description of Proposed Research (Part 2 of the Case for Support)	✓	✓		Max 8 sides A4
Data Management Plan	✓	✓		Max 1 sides A4
Justification of Resources	✓	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Pathways to Impact	✓	✓		Max 2 sides A4
Letters of support from Project Partners	✓	✓		Max 2 sides A4 each
CVs for named research staff and Visiting Researchers from all component Research Organisations			✓	Max 2 sides A4 each
CVs for all Principal and Co-I Investigators from all component Research Organisations			✓	Max 2 sides A4 each

Full Call Timeline

Date	Stage	Applicant responsibilities	Assessment
8 March 2016	Announcement of the 2016 Grants Call		
17 May 2016	Submission of Full Proposals	Applicants to submit proposals via the Joint electronic Submissions (Je-S) System	
End June 2016	Assessment Panel		An external Assessment Panel will review, grade and rank all of the proposals, and produce a recommended ranked list for consideration by the PEB
July 2016	PEB meeting		The PEB will consider the recommendations from the Assessment Panel and the strategic needs of the programme in making the final funding decision
August 2016	Grants Awarded		
1 September 2016	Grants Start		

NB: Please note that all these dates may be subject to change.