

Announcement of Opportunity

Part B: Applying for ESPA 2013 Grants; Outline Bids

Critical Deadlines:

Outline proposals to be submitted via email by **16:00 (4pm) UK Local Time (GMT/UCT), 23rd January 2013**

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 at: <http://www.espa.ac.uk/user/register>.

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



A research programme co-funded by DFID, NERC & ESRC and accredited by LWEC



Summary

The Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) research programme is funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). ESPA is an international programme funding cutting-edge interdisciplinary research generating new primary data and knowledge to enhance global understanding of how ecosystems function and provide services that contribute to human well-being, poverty alleviation and sustainable growth that benefits the poor.

ESPA was launched in 2007 and will run until 2017. The ESPA 2013 Grants call is for projects designed to fill identified gaps within the profile of funded research from past calls, as well as to build upon previously funding rounds. For information about funded ESPA projects please see: www.espa.ac.uk/projects.

The ESPA 2013 call has been designed to enhance the academic and development impact of the ESPA programme by filling significant gaps in the ESPA portfolio and, where possible, capturing emerging opportunities. The call provides an opportunity for the world's best researchers to add significant value to the ESPA programme by filling important research, knowledge and evidence gaps that have been identified.

This Announcement of Opportunity (AO) invites applications into one of three research themes from empirical, inter-/multi-disciplinary projects that are addressing a range of ecosystem services and associated benefits, and are linked to a multi-dimensional analysis of poverty and the ways that poor people can move out of poverty. It is a requirement of all ESPA-funded projects to deliver research excellence with impact.

Applications are invited for funding in the range of between £200,000 and £500,000 GBP Full Economic Cost (FEC). This call has been allocated a total available budget of up to £4million GBP, which may be revised subject to the discretion of the Programme Executive board (PEB). Projects will be funded for a maximum duration of between 24 and 30 months, with an expected start date between 1 September and 1 November 2013. Projects will only be eligible to delay their start from this date by up to 3 months. All other standard NERC guidelines will apply.

Projects will be selected through a two-stage process, firstly with submission of an outline bid proposal, after which a subset will be invited to submit full proposals.

Outline Proposals must be submitted via email to espa@nerc.ac.uk by 16:00 (4pm) UK Local Time (GMT/UCT), 23rd January 2013

Full Proposals must be submitted via JeS by 16:00 GMT+1 /UCT+1 on 3rd April 2013

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Abbreviations

AO	Announcement of Opportunity
Co-I	Co-Investigator
CV	Curriculum Vitae/Resume
DFID	Department for International Development
EIRG	Evidence and Impact Research Grant (ESPA)
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
LWEC	Living with Environmental Change
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PEB	Programme Executive Board
PFG	Programme Framework Grant (ESPA)
PI	Principal Investigator
PPD	Partnership and Project Development Grant (ESPA)
PMG	Programme Management Group
RC	Research Council
RCUK	Research Councils UK
UTC	Coordinated Universal Time

Change Log

In addition to the Change Log for this document, the ESPA Secretariat has published a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to support the call available at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/programmes/espa/events/ao-2013.asp> or by emailing espa@nerc.ac.uk.

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 the Directorate's mailing list.

Date	Section	Page	Detail

1 Call for ESPA 2012 Grants

1.1 Objective

- 1.1.1 This Announcement of Opportunity (AO) invites applications into one of three research themes from empirical, inter/multi-disciplinary projects that are addressing a range of ecosystem services and associated benefits, and are linked to a multi-dimensional analysis of poverty and the ways that poor people can move out of poverty. It is a requirement of all ESPA-funded projects to deliver research excellence with impact.
- 1.1.2 Projects funded under the ESPA 2013 will enhance the academic and development impact of the ESPA programme by filling significant gaps in the ESPA portfolio and, where possible, capturing emerging opportunities. The call provides an opportunity for the world's best researchers to add significant value to the ESPA programme by filling important research, knowledge and evidence gaps that have been identified.
- 1.1.3 **For full details of the scope and requirements of this call, please read Part A of this AO.**

1.2 Overview

- 1.2.1 This Call will fund a number of medium-sized projects (funding level of between £200K and £500K FEC) which have been designed specifically to add significant value to the ESPA programme by filling important research, knowledge and evidence gaps in the programme. £4 million will be available to fund projects in this call.

Applications to the ESPA 2013 Call Must

- Clearly demonstrate research excellence that has a pathway to impact that will deliver benefits to poor people living in low income countries
- Have clear hypotheses and/or conceptual frameworks that are linked to ESPA's Knowledge strategy
- Include clear methodologies and rationale for the methods proposed
- Demonstrate that they are multi- or interdisciplinary within the research questions, methods and team structure
- Address a range of ecosystems service and associated benefits, and link these to a multi-dimensional analysis of poverty and the ways that poor people can move out of poverty
- Describe how the research responds to the research theme it is addressing
- Consider natural and social systems and processes, and the links between them
- Demonstrate how their proposal responds to the ESPA Knowledge and Impact Strategies
- Include multiple dimensions of poverty and human well-being and methods to track or model trends resulting from changes to or within ecosystems (see ESPA's Poverty Framework)
- Demonstrate understanding of the ecosystem processes that underpin different services and benefits in order to identify synergies and trade-offs between them (see ESPA's Knowledge Strategy)

- Explain how the research will enhance global knowledge and evidence describing the ways that ecosystem services contribute to poverty reduction in low-income countries
- Make explicit links from research and its expected outcomes to poverty alleviation, economic growth that benefits the poor and enhanced resilience of delivery of ecosystem services of importance to the poor.
- Demonstrate demand for the research and how it will contribute to ESPA's overall academic and development impact; this could include demand from other on-going ESPA projects
- Document any relevant links and potential synergies with other ESPA research investments
- Demonstrate how the research will add significant value to the existing ESPA portfolio of research.

2 Summary of the Application Process

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 This call has two stages, the first of which comprises submission of an outline bid which will be assessed internally by a panel comprising senior members of the ESPA Directorate, Programme Executive Board and Programme Management Group. A subset of applications will then be invited to submit full proposals through the Je-S platform, and these will be sent to full external peer review.

3 Outline Proposal Stage

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 The first stage of the application process will be a short Outline Proposal which will be assessed internally on the basis of potential to contribute to the overall scientific and development impact of the programme, and also whether the proposal demonstrates that it fits within the remit and objectives of the call.
- 3.1.2 Applicants must use the standard format templates for ESPA Grants 2013 outline bids, available from <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/programmes/espa/events/ao-2013.asp>
- 6.1.3 Applicants must submit all required elements in order to be eligible. Outline proposals should be submitted in black & white and as a PDF document.
- 6.1.4 The Outline bid will include a short case for support (maximum of 1500 words) that should describe the proposed research and location, the poverty status of people whose lives depend on the ecosystem and the way that the research is likely to deliver development impact.
- 3.1.5 Successful applicants who are invited to produce a full proposal will be informed shortly after assessment (c. 1st week February 2013).
- 3.1.6 Applicants should only submit one Outline Proposal per project.
- 3.1.7 Applicants can only be named on a maximum of two proposals, and may only be named as the Principal Investigator (PI) on one of these.

3.2 Content of ESPA 2013 Grants Outline Proposal

- 3.2.1 Applicants should fill out the standard template available at <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/programmes/espa/events/ao-2013.asp>. Within this you will have to include:
- The Research Theme applied to (A, B or C)
 - Proposed start date, length of research grant
 - Total Proposed Budget for the research grant
 - Names and institutions of key members of the research team
 - Details of already identified project partners
 - Track Record
 - Case for Support
 - Details of links between the proposed research and other funded ESPA research grants
 - Geographic location of the proposed research

- 3.2.2 Applications must be submitted using Arial font with a **minimum size of 11pt**.
- 3.2.3 Word and character limits indicated in this form will be strictly enforced. **Any proposal that exceed the word or character limits will be rejected before review.**
- 3.3 Case for Support
- 3.3.1 The Outline bid will include a short case for support (maximum of 1500 words) that should describe the proposed research and research location; the range of ecosystem functions, processes and services considered; the poverty status of people whose lives depend on the ecosystem; the way that the research is likely to deliver development impact; and clearly state how the research is addressing the theme to which you are applying. In particular, the outline case for support should summarise how the project will address the criteria detailed in Part A of this AO (sections 1.4 & 1.5).
- 3.3.2 References can be included in addition to the 1500 word limit, but should be kept to a **maximum of 1 page A4**.
- 3.3.3 Applicants can include **1 clear diagram**, but text within the diagram should be kept to a minimum.
- 3.4 Budget
- 3.4.1 Whilst you are not expected to produce a full budget at this stage, you are required to submit a headline figure of the total budget you expect to request within the £200-500K available.
- 3.4.2 The ESPA Programme is committed to providing value for money, and ensuring that all expenditure is appropriate and justified.
- 3.4.3 Additional to this, ESPA encourages projects to secure or leverage additional investment from external parties in addition to those funds being requested from the ESPA Programme itself. Leveraging of funds or in kind support (in terms of time or equipment) has the potential to add huge value to any ESPA project. There is a section of the Outline Bid pro forma where you should declare any such additional support that you have secured.

Outline proposals must be submitted electronically by email to the ESPA Secretariat at espa@nerc.ac.uk by 16:00 (4pm) UK local time (GMT+1 /UTC+1) on 23rd January 2013

Late submissions WILL NOT be accepted.

4 Summary of Requirements

4.1 Outline Bids

4.1.1 Submission of the Outline Bid Template to include details of the following:

Document Type	Required	Number limit
Title of proposal	✓	150 characters
Call Theme	✓	
Proposed Start Date	✓	
Proposed Project Length	✓	
Proposed Total Budget	✓	
Details of Project Team	✓	No limit
Project Partners	✓	No limit
Track Record	✓	500 words
Description of Proposed Research (Case for Support)	✓	1500 words
Links to ESPA funded research	✓	400 words
Location and Geographic Scope	✓	400 words
Details of Additional Support		400 words

5 Full Call Timeline

Date	Stage	Applicant responsibilities	Assessment
5 th December 2012	Announcement of the 2012 Grants Call		
23 rd January 2013	Deadline for Outline Bids	Outline Bid must be submitted via email to the ESPA Secretariat	Internal Assessment by PEB/Directorate/ PMG
5 th February	Successful outline bid applicants invited to submit full proposal	Applicants to prepare full proposals	
3 rd April 2013	Submission of Full Proposals	Applicants to submit proposals via the Joint electronic Submissions (Je-S) System	Full External peer review
3 rd June	Shortlist Meeting		PEB will reject at this stage any proposals that are clearly uncompetitive on the basis of the external peer review scores and comments
4 th – 14 th June	PI Response	PIs to respond to reviewer comments and submit responses via Je-S	
Prior to Moderating Panel	Directorate Assessment		The Directorate will provide a ranked list independent of the peer review process which will remark upon the fit to call and potential contribution to the programme for the final set of full proposals. This list will be sent to PEB to consider alongside the recommendation from the moderating panel.
10 th July	Moderating Panel Meeting		An external Moderating panel will consider the external reviews and proposal a final grade for proposals, and produce a ranked list for consideration by the PEB
11 th July	PEB meeting		The PEB will consider the recommendations from both the Moderating Panel and Directorate in making the final funding decision
Mid – End July	Grants Awarded		
1 st September – 1 st November	Grants Start		

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