

NERC Cross-disciplinary research for Environmental Solutions – UCL Funds Available. Deadline 12noon Wednesday 30 November 2022

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) has awarded a grant of £100,000 to UCL that will support academics and researchers to build expertise and agility to work across disciplinary boundaries within Discovery Science. Funds must be spent by 31 March 2023 at the latest.

The NERC Cross-disciplinary research for Environmental Solutions funding will:

- support UCL academics and researchers (from all career stages) to build and enhance collaborations that will transcend disciplinary and organisational boundaries in order to address the environmental challenges we face;
- expand upon the momentum we have already created;
- and move towards true integration of disciplines.

At UCL, this will be supported by the UCL Environment Domain via an internal call for proposals.

Background and Remit

Through this initiative, NERC seeks to facilitate exciting new collaborations for our community that will build momentum towards true discipline integration and enable adventurous and ambitious curiosity-driven, high-risk and high-reward projects that push the boundaries of Discovery Science. The initiative will support HEIs to initiate activities that will help the academic community to develop an understanding of different cross-disciplinary research perspectives and methodologies that could be used to enable discoveries that unlock new knowledge within the environmental sciences. The funding could be used to undertake a single larger collective, interdisciplinary discovery science programme activity, or a suite of smaller activities.

Examples of the types of ‘discipline-hopping’ activities that could be undertaken include (but are not limited to):

- Embedding researchers, for a period of time, in departments outside of their own discipline area (within the same organisation, or in other eligible UK research organisations).
- Sharing insights on priorities and looking for synergies/ new ideas that cut across departmental boundaries.
- Work shadowing in other departments, for example to learn new skills and techniques.
- Organising meetings/ seminars/ workshops between departments and disciplines to share learning, understanding of key terms, concepts, language and tools to tackle problems.

Requirements and eligibility:

The funding must be used to facilitate and enhance interdisciplinary working in NERC Discovery Science. In line with the ambition of the Pushing the Frontiers of environmental science call NERC are seeking to pump prime collaborations that will enable researchers to be truly adventurous and ambitious in the pursuit of curiosity-driven, high-risk and high-reward projects that address environmental challenges.

This funding will cover collaborations (to enable discovery within environmental science) across the breadth of UKRI remit, including the arts, humanities, engineering and technology and medical sciences.

The grant can be used to support academics and researchers employed by the HEI at lecturer (or equivalent) level or above and Post-Doctoral Research Assistants. PhD students are not eligible.

The funding can be used to support activities within your organisation, or in partnership with other UK research organisations (and/ or end users)

What is available:

NERC is offering £100k at 100% FEC.

Due to the nature of this funding and internal funds available elsewhere at UCL, we encourage applications above £15,000. You may apply for up to £100k.

All funding must be spent by 31 March 2023.

Eligible costs include:

- Directly Allocated staff costs, plus associated indirect and estates costs – up to a total of 10% of PI and CO-I time can be applied for
- Directly Incurred staff costs, plus associated indirect and estates costs
- Directly Incurred T&S
- Directly Incurred Other costs (to cover other expenses, workshops, consumables etc.)

Equipment (single items costing over £10k) is not an eligible cost on this grant

UCL Internal Call

We are now inviting applications to this funding scheme from across UCL

In order to apply for this internal funding scheme, please complete the application form online here: <https://forms.office.com/r/FWddqTahfz> by 12noon on Wednesday 30 November 2022 (please note this has been extended from the original deadline of the 24 November)

All application forms must be accompanied by an internal standalone worktribe, please speak to your relevant departmental administrators about this as soon as possible.

The responses from this form will be assessed by a cross UCL panel overseen by the Environment Domain. The panel will assess proposals on the following:

- The quality of the application and how the proposed research links to the NERC Pushing the Frontiers ambitions.
- How the proposed activities help create new collaborations or enhance existing collaborations.
- How the activities help to develop an understanding of different cross-disciplinary research perspectives and/or methodologies within the environmental sciences.
- The impact of the activities/collaborations.
- The extent to which the proposed activities can be delivered within the timeframe and budget.

We hope to communicate the outcome W/C 5 December 2022.

If you have any queries or require the application form in an alternative format please do not hesitate to contact Becca: b.burns@ucl.ac.uk

Timings:

W/C 31 October 2022: Announcement of Opportunity

Wednesday 30 November 12noon: Deadline for application forms to be completed

W/C 5 December: Panel Meeting with successful applicants contacted shortly after.

31 March 2023: Funds to be spent.

PIs will also need to complete a post project report form which will be shared in late February 2023.