

**BU Policy for NERC Demand Management Measures**

**Introduction**

NERC introduced [demand management](https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/guidance-for-applicants/types-of-funding-we-offer/discovery-science/demand-management/) measures in 2012. These were revised in 2015 to reduce the number and size of applications from research organisations for NERC’s discovery science standard grant scheme, and ensure research excellence, efficiency and value for money for the taxpayer.

At the same time, demand management measures in the form of a new institutional-level submission policy were introduced. This is based on historic application and award data and limits the number of applications an individual research organisation can make, where that organisation fails to meet a 20 per cent success rate quality threshold.

The calculation for the 20 per cent success rate quality threshold will be based on data from six previous standard grant rounds. As the standard grant scheme has been superseded, demand management measures will be applied to the Pushing the Frontiers scheme only. The measures for pushing the frontiers will be based on the previous approach utilised for standard grants.

**NERC Measures**

An application counts towards an organisation’s quota, where the organisation is applying as the grant holding organisation (of the lead or component grant). This will be the organisation of the Principal Investigator of the lead or component grant.

The table shows which data will be used to determine the quota:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quota year** | **Closing dates** | **Quota announced** | **6 round data used** |
| 2019/20 | JUL19, JAN20 | January 2019 | JULY15, JAN16, JULY16, JAN17, JUL17, JAN18 |
| 2020/21 | JUL20, JAN21 | January 2020 | JULY16, JAN17, JUL17, JAN18, JUL18, JAN19 |
| 2021/22 | JUL21, JAN22 | January 2021 | JAN17, JUL17, JAN18, JUL18, JAN19, JUL19 |
| 2022/23 | JUL22, JAN23 | January 2022 | JUL17, JAN18, JUL18, JAN19, JUL19, JAN20 |

**What does this mean for BU?**

As at January 2022, BU has been capped at **one** application per standard grant round. This is based on the following success rate:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Research Organisation** | **Cumulative Number of Applications** | **Cumulative Number of Awards** | **Success Rate (%)** | **No. of Awards x 5 / 6** | **Cap** |
| Bournemouth University | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |

**BU NERC demand management process**

As a result of being capped at **one application** per round, BU has introduced a process for determining which application will be submitted to each NERC Pushing the Frontiers grant round. This will take the form of an internal competition which will include peer review. There will be two internal deadlines per year based on the NERC Pushing the Frontiers grant deadlines in January and July.

The process for selecting an application will be as follows:

RDS completes checks and approves submission

PI submits final version for feedback from panel

Feedback provided to all those who submitted EoI

Panel selects one applicant to submit proposal

Expression of Interest deadline

NERC have advised that where a research organisation submits more applications to any round than allowed under the cap, NERC will office-reject any excess applications, based purely on the time of submission through the Je-S system (last submitted = first rejected). However, as RDS submit applications through Je-S on behalf of applicants, RDS will not submit any applications that do not have prior agreement from the internal competition. Any lead or component application from another research organisation linked to the rejected application will also be rejected. If any applications are subsequently rejected based on rule adherence or remit, a research organisation cannot submit alternative applications.

**Timetable for internal competitions 2022/23**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **January 2023 round** | **July 2023 round** |
| Deadline for Expressions of Interest (EoI) | 30 September 22 | 10 March 23 |
| Panel select one applicant to submit full proposal | 14 October 22 | 24 March 23 |
| Selected applicant submits full proposal to panel for review | 25 November 22 | 26 May 23 |
| Final version submitted to RDS | Early Jan 2023 | Early July 2023 |
| RDS completes checks and approves submission | 5 working days before submission | 5 working days before submission |
| Funder submission deadline (tbc)\* | Mid-Jan 2023 | Mid-July 2023 |

|  |
| --- |
| \**Some dates may be subject to change depending on funder’s submission deadline. We will inform applicants the final dates as soon as these become available. This timetable will be updated accordingly.* |

**Applying to January 2023 round**

***Call for Expressions of Interest (EoI)***

* PIs planning to submit an application to NERC are requested to submit an EoI to [andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk). The EoI template can be found in Annex I.
* EoIs received by the deadline will be sent to the review panel for review. The review panel will be made up of BU academics who have previously been successful in securing NERC funding.

***Applicant selection***

* The review panel will consider responses received, rank proposals and select the EoI to be developed to full proposal stage.
* **One EoI** will be selected at this stage.
* EoIs will be assessed using both the NERC assessment criteria (Annex II) and the evaluation form (Annex III).
* All PIs who submitted an EoI will receive anonymous feedback.

***BU supported EoI development***

* The EoI selected should be developed as a draft proposal. The PI will be expected to work with their relevant Funding Development Officer and Research Facilitator and will also have access to an External Application Reviewer with relevant expertise to support application development.
* The PI is requested to submit a complete draft to [andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk) including all sections of the Je-S form, attachments, and budget by the deadline stated above.
* This draft proposal will be sent to the review panel for their comments.

***Review panel provides feedback to full proposal***

* The review panel will review the complete draft and provide written feedback.
* The PI is requested to incorporate reviewers’ comments and submit the final draft on

Je-S.

* RDS will complete necessary checks and approve the proposal for submission on Je-S, subject to necessary internal approvals being obtained.

**General guidance**

Applicants should adhere to the deadlines and guidelines set out in this document. Proposals that are received out of these dates or that exceed the number of words/pages allowed will not be considered for evaluation.

We strongly recommend that applicants discuss their proposals with their Head of Department and/or Deputy Dean for Research and Professional Practice and have their EoI peer reviewed before they submit to the internal review panel. Applicants are required to incorporate the panel’s feedback or justify why this has not been taken into consideration.

**Appeals process**

If an EoI is not selected to be submitted as an application, the Principal Investigator can appeal to Professor Tim McIntyre-Bhatty, Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Any appeals must be submitted within ten working days of the original decision. All appeals will be considered within ten working days of receipt.

**RDS Contacts**

Please contact Lisa Andrews – [andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk) RDS Research Facilitator if you wish to submit an Expression of Interest.

**Useful links**

[NERC Demand Management site](https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/guidance-for-applicants/types-of-funding-we-offer/discovery-science/demand-management/) – this includes FAQs at the bottom of the page

[NERC Discovery Science site](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/available/researchgrants/standard/)

[RDS Funding Development Team](http://blogs.bournemouth.ac.uk/research/contact/funding-development-team/) - contacts

Annex I

**Expression of Interest for NERC Pushing the Frontiers call – closing date January 2023**

|  |
| --- |
| **Draft title** |
|  |
| **Name of BU investigators**  Please also provide a short track record for the PI and Co-Is **(max 50 words each)** |
|  |
| **Research team and project partners (if applicable)**  Please also provide a short track record for the research team **(max 150 words in total)** |
|  |
| **Objectives**  Please list the main objectives of the proposed research in the order of priority **(max 200 words)** |
|  |
| **Lay summary**  Describe the proposed research in simple terms in a way that could be publicised to a general audience **(max 200 words)** |
|  |
| **Summary of the project**  Please summarise the project overall **(max 500 words)** |
|  |
| **Potential impact**  **(max 150 words)** |
|  |
| **Resource summary**  Please provide a summary of the resources to be requested, specifically considering the following:  - *Will any equipment >£10k be requested that requires match funding?*  - *Are there any costs incurred that may not be eligible, e.g. refurbishment of existing equipment?* |
|  |

Submit to Lisa Andrews, Research Facilitator, RDS – [andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk)

Annex II

**NERC Pushing the Frontiers Assessment Criteria**

Proposals are assessed on their scientific excellence and considering NERC assessment criteria (<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/NERC-010822-PushingTheFrontiersReviewerGuidance.pdf>). The Pushing the Frontiers grant proposals will be scored against two criteria: i) Research Excellence; ii) Capability to Deliver. Each proposal will receive a score from each reviewer from 1-3, where for both elements of the assessment 1 is non-competitive and 3 is outstanding. Only integer scores are allowed.

Review comments should consider:

* To what extent does the proposed research address an important environmental challenge, and involve objectives that are ambitious and beyond the state-of-the-art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?
* To what extent does the proposal push the frontiers of knowledge and have the potential to lead to ground-breaking, high-risk, high-reward, innovative scientific discovery?
* To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible, bearing in mind that the proposed research is high risk/high gain?

Overall Research Excellence will be assessed as per the scale below (NERC)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Research Excellence** |
| **3** | **Outstanding**  The proposed work is of excellent scientific quality. It is world-leading, at the forefront of the field internationally. It meets outstanding standards in terms of the initiation of ground-breaking, high-risk, high-reward, innovative scientific discovery and/or the development of technology or methodology, to address an important environmental challenge. **High priority for funding** |
| **2** | **Good**  The proposed work is of high scientific quality (possibly with aspects of excellence). It is internationally competitive, at the forefront of the field nationally. It meets high standards in terms of the initiation of ground-breaking, high-risk, high-reward, innovative scientific discovery, and/or the development of technology or methodology, to address an important environmental challenge. **Fundable** |
| **1** | **Interesting/non-competitive**  The proposed work has insufficient merit to be considered ground-breaking and innovative and/or is not addressing an important environmental challenge and/or is not considered feasible. **Not a priority for funding/not fundable** |

**Capability to Deliver**

The Capability to Deliver document should be a narrative which explains how the team’s relevant experience and expertise demonstrates their ability to successfully deliver the proposal (note that proposals can be submitted by solo applicants, in which cases ‘team’ would refer to the individual applicant).

Applicants have been advised to draw on the Royal Society’s Résumé for Researchers when completing their Capability to Deliver statement.

Reviewers should assess Capability to Deliver by considering to what extent:

* has the team made an outstanding contribution to the generation of new understanding and demonstrated the key skills required to do this?
* does the team demonstrate appropriate expertise and capability to successfully execute the proposed project, including evidence for capacity to support and mentor researchers involved as appropriate?
* does the team demonstrate capability to contribute to the wider research community, for example contributions to improving research culture or advocacy for better research integrity?
* does the team demonstrate capability to contribute to broader society, for example through engagement?

Upon consideration of this assessment criterion, a score of between 1 and 3 should be awarded according to the scoring system below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Capability to Deliver** |
| **3** | **Outstanding**  The team has made an outstanding contribution to the generation of groundbreaking new ideas, demonstrates visionary expertise and excellent capability to successfully execute the proposed project. The team demonstrates a strong capability to contribute significantly to the wider research community and broader society. The team has illustrated an outstanding capability to deliver groundbreaking research through this project. |
| **2** | **Good**  The team has made a contribution to the generation of ground-breaking new ideas, demonstrates appropriate expertise and capability to successfully execute the proposed project. The team demonstrates the capability to contribute to the wider research community and broader society. The team has illustrated the capability to deliver ground-breaking research through this project. |
| **1** | **Interesting/non-competitive**  The team has shown insufficient evidence of contributing to the generation of ground-breaking new ideas, appropriate expertise and/or capability to successfully execute the proposed project. The team has not demonstrated the capability to contribute to the wider research community and broader society. |

Annex III

**NERC Pushing the Frontiers grants – Assessment Form**

*This form should be completed by the nominated reviewer(s) assigned to each proposal.*

*Feedback provided will be anonymised and shared with applicants.*

***Please return the form to*** [***andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk***](mailto:andrewsl@bournemouth.ac.uk)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Researcher (PI):** | **Department / Faculty:** |
| **Evaluation Criteria**  Please provide comments on the extent that the proposal meets the criteria assessed in each question. | |
| **1. Appropriateness and track record of the PI and the team to carry out and deliver the proposed work** | |
|  | |
| **2. Objectives**  *Please state if objectives of the proposal have been clearly formulated.* | |
|  | |
| **3. Lay summary**  *Comment on the extent the summary has been written in plain English and whether it clearly explains the aims, objectives, the potential applications and benefits of the research.* | |
|  | |
| **4. Summary of the project** *Please comment on the research excellence of the proposal (use the assessment criteria provided). For example: quality and feasibility of the research proposal including research methods; significance and quality of the work; the scientific impact it will have in terms of enhancing or developing insights; developing the field and adding to knowledge or understanding in the area to be studied in a national or international context. Please also comment on whether the proposal is novel, ambitious, timely and transformative.* | |
|  | |
| **5. Impact**  *Comment on whether the beneficiaries have been clearly identified and how they will benefit from this research.* | |
|  | |
| **6. Resource summary**  *Please comment on the resources requested. Are all the costs requested required for the research proposed, and sufficiently justified?* | |
|  | |
| ***7.*** *Please comment on the* ***strengths and weaknesses*** *of the proposed research, the risks associated with the research, the resources requested and the value added by any project partners* | |
|  | |

**Overall Assessment score for research excellence** (Tick just one option for each criterion)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Research Excellence | | | Capability to Deliver | | |
| **Outstanding** | **Good** | **Interesting/non-competitive** | **Outstanding** | **Good** | **Interesting/non-competitive** |