# Equitable nature-based climate resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa

Apply for funding to enhance understanding of scalability and contextualisation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Working in transdisciplinary teams, including SSA partners, you will explore opportunities for equitable nature-based climate resilience.

You must be based at a UK research organisation eligible for UKRI funding.

All projects must involve partners based in SSA as a project co-lead (international) (PcL (I)).

The full economic cost (FEC) of your project can be up to £2.25 million. We will fund 80% of the FEC, with certain international partner costs at 100%.

Before applying for funding, check the following:

* [NERC eligibility guidance for applicants](https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/)
* [Eligibility of your organisation](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligibility-as-an-organisation/#contents-list)

UKRI has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on UKRI’s new Funding Service from 22 May 2023.

For full details, visit [Eligibility as an individual](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligibility-as-an-individual/#contents-list).

### Who is eligible to apply

All projects are required to have a project lead (PL, previously principal investigator) based in a UK research organisation eligible for UKRI funding. Project co-leads (previously co-investigators) and researchers based in SSA countries are required and will receive eligible funding through the lead UK research organisation. Projects may also involve other collaborators that are not eligible to be project co-leads but would be an integral part of the project and be named as project partners.

We welcome applications from individuals at any career stage, subject to UKRI eligibility criteria. In particular we encourage the inclusion of early career researchers in key roles within the project, for example, as researcher co-lead, leading work packages and so on.

This funding opportunity requires transdisciplinary teams and therefore will include research from multiple UKRI research council remit areas.

Project co-leads (PcLs, previously co-investigators) can be from UK or SSA-based research organisations (for example, higher education organisations, public laboratories, or other non-profit research-intensive organisations) and can receive funds via the lead UK research organisation.

Project co-leads (international) (PcL(I)) from SSA countries can receive funding for direct costs and some indirect costs.

The funders recognise the importance of, and want to encourage, the involvement of non-academic organisations, such as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), local and national policymakers, as well as organisations representing affected communities. If a collaborating organisation is integral to the design and delivery of the project and is contributing to the project through financial or in-kind contributions to the grant (for example, staff time, access to facilities, data, sites) then they should be listed as a project partner.

#### Project partners

PcLs and participating organisations not meeting the criteria to be a research organisation can be project partners on the awards based on the following requirements:

* third sector organisations – NGOs, charities and other non-profit civil society organisations (not meeting the minimum requirements for research partner organisations) can be included on applications as project partners and are eligible to receive a contribution towards costs from the award (see the ‘Eligible costs’ section).
* government departments and business – overseas and UK government departments and businesses should be engaged where appropriate but are not eligible to directly receive funds on the awards.

#### Sub-contracts

Sub-contracts are eligible costs on applications submitted to this funding opportunity but should only be used for the procurement of goods and services. Sub-contracts are not permitted for research partners providing intellectual input into the project, where a research partner or project partner relationship is more appropriate.

It is important to highlight that any UK research organisation awarded a grant is responsible for the conduct and administration of that grant. It is accountable for the effective use of public funds and must therefore ensure that all grant monies are subject to proper financial management processes.

It is the research organisation’s responsibility to ensure that expenditure on collaborations in the UK and abroad is subject to robust controls to ensure value for money and propriety and that all costs should be fully vouched and maintained for possible inspection and checks by, or on behalf of, UKRI.

If any of the research organisations that receive funding from UKRI wishing to sub-contract research to an overseas research organisation, or include a PcL at an overseas research organisation, then the UK research organisation must undertake due diligence checks to ensure that the funding will be appropriately used. As part of UKRI funding assurance, non-UK research organisations may be requested to complete a UKRI Overseas Due Diligence Questionnaire.

Research organisations may be contacted by UKRI at any point during the review process. This is to expedite our assurance process. If UKRI does contact any non-UK research partner organisation named on an application, the lead organisation will be informed.

For organisations hosting non-UK PcLs, due diligence checks are for UKRI’s assurance purposes only and do not replace the due diligence requirements of the lead organisation. However, when obtaining information from non-UK research organisations, UKRI will request permission to share the information provided with the lead organisation. The lead organisation can then use this information for their own due diligence processes should they wish.

### Who is not eligible to apply

You may be involved in no more than two applications submitted to this funding opportunity. Only one of these can be as project lead.

#### International applicants

Apart from the listed exceptions, we do not fund overseas organisations, except for specific costs for project co-lead (international) from Norway and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA).

Read more about this in the [NERC eligibility guidance for applicants](https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/).

You should include all other international collaborators outside of SSA (or UK partners not based at approved organisations) as project partners. Project partners outside of SSA, or from the UK/SSA government and business sectors fund their own involvement.

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to achieving equality of opportunity for all funding applicants. We encourage applications from a diverse range of researchers.

We support people to work in a way that suits their personal circumstances. This includes:

* career breaks
* support for people with caring responsibilities
* flexible working
* alternative working patterns

Find out more about [equality, diversity and inclusion at UKRI](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/) and [NERC’s diversity and inclusion action plan](https://www.ukri.org/publications/nerc-diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan-2022-2025/).

### Scope

For more information on the background of this funding opportunity, go to the Additional information section.

#### Context

The [WEF Global Risks Report 2022, page 7 (PDF, 5.6MB)](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_The_Global_Risks_Report_2022.pdf) states that ‘climate action failure’, ‘extreme weather’ and ‘biodiversity loss’ are the most severe long-term threats to face the world over the next decade, as well as being the most potentially damaging to people and planet.

Therefore, increased research is needed to ensure that Nature-based Solutions (NbS) can achieve their potential to tackle both the climate and biodiversity crisis while also contributing to sustainable development ([Understanding the value and limits of nature-based solutions to climate change and other global challenges](https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rstb.2019.0120)).

Globally, the interest in NbS or using nature for climate resilience is growing, with international agreements such as the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](https://www.undrr.org/publication/sendai-framework-disaster-risk-reduction-2015-2030) and the [Paris Climate Agreement](https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement) underlining the importance of NbS as dependable approaches that address climate change.

The [UNEA-5](https://www.unep.org/environmentassembly/about-unea-5) have formally adopted the definition of NbS as: “actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human wellbeing, ecosystem services and resilience and biodiversity benefits”.

Eight of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have targets related to environmental sustainability and the role of the environment in supporting economic growth and societal wellbeing, demonstrating the potential wide-ranging benefits of NbS.

However, to be effective, NbS need to be appropriate for the environmental, social, economic and cultural contexts in which they will be applied, in current and future climate scenarios. NbS are being recognised in High Income Countries, for example the [UK government’s 25 year environment plan (PDF, 11.1MB)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf), however it is not well-reflected in the policies of low and middle-income countries (LMICs).

A lack of knowledge about the suitability and feasibility of NbS in different environments or contexts is a major barrier to uptake internationally. There is currently a need to better understand the limits of varying NbS interventions, what constitutes good practice, and how they address climate risk, equity and sustainability.

There are also notable financial and governance challenges involved in implementing NbS at scale, demonstrating the need for further research to ensure co-benefits and prevent trade-offs ([Understanding the value and limits of nature-based solutions to climate change and other global challenges](https://royalsocietypublishing.org/doi/10.1098/rstb.2019.0120)).

Funders, investors and decision makers need to be confident that the NbS initiatives they support are effective and scalable and consider potential externalities. However, many may lack the resources or expertise to analyse and evaluate this, including in the UK where NbS have been slow to scale up. With growing interest by governments and businesses to adopt and apply NbS, the first ever [IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions](https://www.iucn.org/news/europe/202007/iucn-global-standard-nbs) was developed in 2020 to guide users through NbS applications and set benchmarks for their progress.

The recent [IPCC AR6 WGII report (PDF, 4MB)](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SOD_Chapter18.pdf) affirms that climate action and sustainable development need to be pursued in an integrated manner in order to enhance human and ecological wellbeing. The concept of ‘Climate resilient development’ (CRD) deliberately adopts mitigation and adaptation measures to secure a safe climate, meet basic needs, eliminate poverty and enable equitable, just and sustainable development.

The programme will produce research outputs that support the refinement of the IUCN ‘Global Standard’ and contribute to ‘Climate Resilient Development’ pathways. The programme will contribute to delivering relevant UK government priorities including our contribution to meeting the [Kunming-Montreal Protocol](https://www.cbd.int/article/cop15-final-text-kunming-montreal-gbf-221222), Pillars 1 and 3 of the UK government’s [Integrated Review 2023 (PDF, 11.3MB)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1143306/11857435_NS_IR_Refresh_2023_Supply_AllPages_Revision_6_WEB_PDF.pdf), the [International Development Strategy (IDS, 2022) (PDF, 1MB)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1075328/uk-governments-strategy-international-development.pdf) and the [Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/final-report-the-economics-of-biodiversity-the-dasgupta-review) recommendations.

The programme is supported through two of the five UKRI Strategic Themes – specifically ‘[Building a Green Future](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/building-a-green-future/)’ (BaGF) and ‘[Building a Secure and Resilient World](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/building-a-secure-and-resilient-world/)’ (BaSRW), particularly to the sub-theme on Strengthening Resilience in Natural and Built Environment.

### Programme objectives

The joint UKRI and FCDO transdisciplinary research programme aims to enhance understanding of the scalability and contextualisation of NbS in SSA. It will:

* address a lack of knowledge about the suitability and feasibility of NbS in different SSA contexts and their potential impacts on local ecosystems and communities
* explore opportunities for NbS to be scaled upwards and outwards in SSA, through qualitative and quantitative assessment of the environmental, agrarian, economic and social impacts of NbS at scale
* better understand how NbS can increase the resilience of ecosystems and people to climate-associated risks and be incorporated into policy at the local and national scale alongside long-term investment from the public and private sector
* address equity and temporal sustainability of NbS for environments and people, through considering gender equity and social inclusion (GESI), knowledge mobilisation and the integration of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) in NbS design, implementation and maintenance

Your application should describe anticipated outcomes and impacts, such as:

* new knowledge and greater understanding around the scalability and contextualisation of NbS across a range of African landscapes and settings, to build resilience to current and future climate risks
* openly accessible evidence base of NbS impacts that makes use of new methods and solutions to understand the diverse impacts of NbS in different contexts, involving multiple disciplines and both formal and informal knowledge
* enhanced capacity for whole-system evaluation and optimisation of NbS interventions, that empowers local community driven governance
* greater equity in NbS in terms of both how the research and implementation is carried out, and the outcomes of NbS interventions
* enhanced temporal sustainability of NbS including factors such as securing long-term finance and evolution of policy drivers
* informing the adoption of NbS into national and local-level policy and public and private investment in SSA, realising the potential for NbS to support climate adaptation of local communities and ecosystems at a range of scales

### Programme scope

Chapter 22 of the [IPCC 2018 AR5 WGII report (PDF, 4.8MB)](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/WGIIAR5-Chap22_FINAL.pdf) highlighted Africa as a future “hotspot” for climate change-related hazards. Water quality and quantity have already been strongly impacted ([Rankoana, 2020](https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJCCSM-04-2020-0033/full/html)) and climate change will have a massive impact on food supply [(FAO, 2021](https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en)).

Key climate change-related risks or hazard types highlighted by SSA-based actors while scoping this programme include fluvial and pluvial flooding, heatwaves, drought and invasive species. SSA-based communities are involved in a diverse array of NbS approaches, including management of rivers, forests and wetlands impacted by climate change, tree planting and invasive plant clearing, livestock management, sustainable urban drainage systems and urban farming.

There is a need to identify how effective NbS are at increasing resilience to multiple climate change-induced risks in SSA, their wider impacts (for example at the catchment-scale or along supply chains) and identify how these can be monitored and improved to enhance equitable outcomes for local environments and people.

The interconnected nature of the socio-economic/ecological systems in which NbS are implemented can lead to varying upstream and downstream consequences across a range of sectors, with implications for (amongst others):

* disaster risk reduction
* land use planning
* food and water security
* biodiversity and habitat protection
* human health
* cultural heritage
* conflict and migration
* interlinked urban, rural and informal systems

Understanding how NbS interact with the environmental context therefore requires a whole-systems approach to monitoring and evaluation of NbS and how their impacts cascade or interact across mosaics of NbS interventions at different scales. Further research is needed to produce realistic costs and benefits (environmental, monetary and non-monetary) of NbS – their implementation at scale and their maintenance, in order to convince governments and communities to engage with NbS interventions as part of national and local-level climate adaptation strategies.

This programme will seek to enhance our understanding of the scalability and contextualisation of NbS in SSA. A greater understanding of how efficacy of NbS vary between contexts is required through comparative analysis. This includes consideration of how current localised interventions can be scaled up, how the benefits they bring change across scales and interact, and how knowledge that has been developed in other settings needs to be adapted for the African context.

A focus on these key topics offers secondary benefits to the UK knowledge base, where findings may be transferred to fill gaps in our own understanding of the efficacy and impacts of UK-based NbS for different contexts and scales.

An investment of up to £9.5 million will enable a programme comprising four large awards of up to £2.25 million over three years, requiring inter, and transdisciplinary teams of researchers including a range of expertise, for example, environmental, social, economic, engineering, biology, health, and arts and humanities together with in-country end users and beneficiaries to co-design and undertake the research required.

Projects will be expected to build on equitable UK-SSA partnerships to address research challenges under all three of the priority themes listed, alongside both underpinning threads of ‘equity’ and ‘temporal sustainability’.

To sustain research impact, projects will also be expected to collaborate with local and national government agencies, the private sector and international actors engaged in NbS or the policy contexts through which they are implemented and should seek to build on Indigenous People and Local Community (IPLC) knowledge.

Projects may focus on a single SSA country or region and the range of hazards and potential NbS in that area; or on a constrained set of challenges and solutions in a number of SSA countries or contexts.

Applications to this programme should primarily aim to utilise NbS to support adaptation of ecosystems/land use or communities to climate change-induced risks, or both, although co-benefits and unintended consequences should be considered.

Your application should build on equitable UK-SSA partnerships to address research challenges under all three of the priority themes:

* contextualisation of nature-based solutions
* scalability of nature-based solutions
* community-driven approaches and governance of nature-based solutions

Exemplar research questions include (but are not limited to):

#### Contextualisation of nature-based solutions

* how do NbS interact with systems/environments they are located within, including grey, green and blue infrastructures and local ecological, policy, social and economic settings?
* how does the efficacy and impact of NbS vary between environmental, cultural and socio-economic contexts? How and where do they work?
* what knowledge and evidence are needed to enable context-driven and context-specific implementation of NbS?
* what are the context specific gaps in knowledge around how NbS can be scaled up for example, for different climate hazards, ecosystem-types, urban/rural settings, agri-systems and governance systems?
* how can research foster the integration of NbS into local policy contexts and existing government frameworks at appropriate scales?

#### Scalability of nature-based solutions

* how can the impacts of NbS at different scales be assessed, including identifying that some are not scalable?
* how to enable systemic evaluation and monitoring of the realistic costs and benefits of NbS implemented at scale (monetary and non-monetary, including valuing nature, quantifying and communicating uncertainty and recognising the cost of no action)? How can both research and traditional knowledge be incorporated?
* what are the implications of upscaling and out-scaling NbS from local to national levels, and to new rural, urban, coastal or informal environments, including consideration of connectivity between landscapes?
* what are the limits of NbS in mitigating climate risks for vulnerable ecosystems and local communities in current and future climate scenarios for example, capacity to withstand extreme weather events?
* how can NbS be mainstreamed across sectors and environments for example, mobilising resources from the private sector to scale up NbS and for community-led implementation and maintenance?
* how do different NbS interact within and between ecosystems and land use types, what are the compound benefits and trade-offs of NbS?

#### Community-driven approaches and governance of nature-based solutions

* how can NbS be optimised to bring maximum co-benefits and outcomes for justice, including exploration of equity of costs and benefits across scales and contexts?
* how to protect and upscale traditional NbS already utilised by local communities – how can research support and learn from this and what are the barriers for example, political economy, threats to land rights?
* how can sustainable NbS maintenance approaches be optimised to maintain value, including building on traditional knowledge and practices?
* how can research help to enshrine bottom-up, community-driven NbS in policy and law to enable greater ownership of local interventions and catalyse sustainable community-level capacity?

Two underpinning ‘threads’ that cut across the programme are ‘Equity’ and ‘Temporal Sustainability’, which all projects will be expected to consider alongside the themes above.

Your application should demonstrate how you will identify and address issues of equity. The term ‘equity’ can be interpreted in a number of ways by different NbS stakeholders in different contexts.

Key considerations are integration of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC), Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and knowledge mobilisation. Projects should foster transdisciplinary knowledge production and integration to enhance the acceptability and longevity of NbS. Projects should look to consider two key aspects of equity:

1. Equity in how the research and implementation is carried out, from research to practice, for example:
   * equitable decision-making and research design, including roles, responsibilities, access to resources, ownership of outputs and benefits
   * building on existing local knowledge and experience from other projects, both formal and informal knowledge
   * need for examples of good equitable case studies to inform future approaches
   * openly available research for all to access, communicated in appropriate format, style, language for all users, including diverse formats such as creative arts
   * integrating IPLC terminology and knowledge into peer-reviewed literature
   * recognising that relational tools required (for example, to build trust) and optimal engagement processes will differ across landscapes and cultural contexts
2. Equity in terms of the outcomes of NbS interventions and the environmental/social/economic impacts of NbS, for example:
   * evidencing the context-specific needs of ecosystems, agri-systems and people
   * value of NbS (benefits, costs, trade-offs) to all stakeholders, including applying appropriate compensation for local trade-offs
   * transparent governance and decision-making
   * community science and wider benefit monitoring

Your application should also describe how you will identify and address issues of temporal sustainability.

Long term, sustainable NbS require consideration of physical longevity of impacts under climate change and land-use change scenarios. However, to underpin sustainability and enhance the impact of research beyond the programme duration, other factors should also be taken into account, such as how to secure long-term finance for NbS, understanding policy and regulatory contexts, maintenance requirements (and community capacity) for NbS, natural evolution of NbS and the need for long-term partnerships.

Your project should look to consider one or more of the following:

* understanding and prediction of climate change impacts on local ecosystems, including agri-systems, and communities
* financial solutions for NbS
* assessment of long-term NbS impacts under current and future climate change scenarios (and evolution of natural systems)
* potential of larger-scale NbS mosaics to cope with climate change extremes
* NbS in rapidly developing contexts
* knowledge mobilisation to decision-makers and IPLC through long term partnerships
* sustainable maintenance schedules (emergency maintenance, routine, and full overhaul)
* policy and regulation requirements within the different contexts

### Exclusions

Excluded from this programme are applications aiming to:

* explore NbS for the primary purpose of climate change mitigation for example, carbon sequestration
* utilise NbS to primarily support ecosystem restoration, or primarily enable the sustainable use of natural resources (information around FCDO and Defra-led funding opportunities focusing in these areas are available in the Additional info section of this page)

### Other considerations

This programme forms part of the UK’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment, and will be awarded in a manner that fits with [ODA guidelines](https://www.oecd.org/development/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm).

### Equitable partnerships

Research partnerships should be transparent and based on mutual respect. Partnerships should aim to have clearly articulated equitable distribution of resources, responsibilities, efforts and benefits. Partnerships should recognise different inputs, different interests and different desired outcomes and should ensure the ethical sharing and use of data, which is responsive to the identified needs of society.

All partners need to be appropriate, involved in the scoping and delivery of the research, and add value. Project teams must consist of a UK-based project lead and an SSA-based project lead (but listed as project co-lead), supported by UK and SSA-based project co-leads, researcher co-leads, project partners and research and innovation associates, as appropriate for the research.

### ODA compliance

When applying to this funding opportunity it is important that you ensure your application is ODA compliant. It must be clear how the application is ODA eligible as defined by “administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective”.

Applications may relate to any SSA country or countries on the DAC list except those that are flagged as likely to graduate from the list during the course of the proposed project. If a country is flagged as likely to graduate it cannot be the primary focus of an application, although it can be included as an additional case study or comparison.

### Gender equality

ODA provided by UKRI must comply with the requirements of the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, which states, the “desirability of providing development assistance that is likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequalities between persons of different gender.” All applications have to address this requirement and detail how meaningful, yet proportionate consideration has been taken as to how the project will contribute to reducing gender inequalities.

It is expected that some projects will have less impact on gender and gender relations and professional judgement of the applicants should be exercised to ensure appropriate consideration of the context and intended aims of the project. You can reference other parts of your application within this statement, if relevant.

Read [UKRI guidance on gender equality compliance](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/guidance-for-equality-diversity-and-inclusion/).

### Safeguarding

UKRI condemns all forms of harm and abuse, including bullying and harassment. We take a zero-tolerance approach to harm and abuse to any individual employed through or associated with our programmes in all contexts. This is whether in humanitarian or fragile and conflict-affected settings, in other field contexts, or within the international or UK research and development community which we fund.

We expect institutions to promote the highest standards in organisational culture and have in place the systems and procedures required to prevent and tackle all incidents of harm and abuse. Your application must detail how they will identify and manage safeguarding risks and what policies and procedures will be in place to enable reporting and investigation of allegations when they arise.

### Research ethics

All ODA projects must be underpinned by a strong research ethic based on mutual respect and understanding for different cultural, ethnic, social and economic beliefs and practices. Solutions to any development challenges must be rooted in, and acceptable to, the institutions, communities and societies where they will operate.

Ethical issues should be interpreted broadly and may encompass areas where regulation and approval processes exist as well as areas where they do not.

You must ensure that the proposed research will be carried out to a high ethical standard and must clearly state how you have considered any potential ethical and health and safety issues and how they will be addressed, ensuring that all necessary ethical approval is in place before the research commences and all risks are minimised.

More guidance can be found in the [ESRC Framework for Research Ethics.](https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics-guidance/)

### Capacity development

UKRI strongly encourages all applications to this funding opportunity to identify research capacity-building activities as part of, and not separate to, the stated research approach. The focus should be on the quality and impact of the research, and how increasing capacity contributes to this. Examples of building capacity include:

* opportunities for those with relevant skills who have not previously worked on development relevant research projects to orient their research towards global issues
* support and mentoring for more junior team members
* co-design of research and implementation with developing country partner staff

### Reporting requirements

Successful applicants will be required to report research outcomes on ResearchFish in line with standard [UKRI Terms and Conditions](https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/meeting-ukri-terms-and-conditions-for-funding/). This is required annually and continues for up to five years after the end of funding.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning will be a key component of the programme and project teams may also be required to participate in a mid-term review and respond to ad hoc reporting requests from UKRI or FCDO.

Project teams will be expected to participate in programme-wide activities such as one-day knowledge exchange workshops, likely at kick-off, mid-term and finale stages.

There will also be opportunities to network with projects funded through the FCDO-led CLARE and REDAA and Defra-led GCBC programmes (read more in the Additional info section), to identify synergies and build greater collective impact.

### Duration

The duration of this award is three years.

Projects must start by 12 February 2024. This date is fixed and non-negotiable.

### Funding available

The full economic cost of your project can be up to £2.25 million.

We will fund 80% of the full economic cost (FEC) with the following exception:

* eligible costs for PcL(I) involvement would be funded at 100%

### What we will fund

The maximum project size is £2.25 million cost to UKRI (including overheads and any UKRI facility costs), with UK institutions eligible for 80% FEC and overseas organisations eligible for 100% direct project costs.

We will automatically reject any applications that go over the budget of £2.25 million.

UKRI will not provide additional funding to cover fluctuations in exchange rates.

UK and non-UK research organisational budgets are indicated as follows:

The costs requested for each organisation should be itemised separately under the participating organisation.

UK research organisations will receive 80% of the FEC. We will fund under all headings except equipment.

For Norwegian or IIASA project co-lead involvement, we will fund 100% for eligible direct costs only (enter these as exceptional costs):

* co-lead or other staff costs
* directly incurred travel and subsistence
* directly incurred other

We will not fund equipment, indirect or estates costs.

For SSA co-lead involvement, we will fund 100% for eligible direct costs (enter these as exceptional costs):

* co-lead or other staff costs
* directly incurred (DI) travel and subsistence
* directly incurred (DI) other

You can request indirect costs of up to 20% of the total direct cost. You should enter this as ‘DI other’.

#### Funding available for project partners

For third sector organisations (for example, NGOs, charities, and other non-profit civil society organisations), we will fund a modest contribution towards their costs on the project at 100% of direct costs. Any non-staff costs must be reasonable: indirect costs and overheads are not allowed. All staff costs must be based on basic salaries (that is, not day rates).

You should enter all costs as an exception on the lead organisations finance table, but fully itemised by organisation, country, and cost breakdown in the justification section.

#### Sub-contracts

You can request costs for procurement of goods and services, including for businesses and government departments. The costs for subcontractors are tied to the country managing the sub-contract, for example, if a SSA country research partner organisation is managing a subcontract it will be awarded at 100%. If a UK partner is managing a sub-contract, it will be awarded at 80%. The most appropriate country should be chosen to manage the sub-contract based on the overall governance arrangements.

For applications involving international applicants, project partners or collaborators, visit [Trusted Research](https://www.cpni.gov.uk/trusted-research) for more information on effective international collaboration.

### What we will not fund

We will not fund PhD studentships.

Requests for equipment of £10,000 and over are not part of this funding opportunity. You should request smaller items of equipment (under £10,000 individually) under ‘Consumables (other directly incurred costs)’ in your application.

### Data management

You must adhere to the [NERC data policy](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/nerc/our-policies-and-standards/nerc-data-policy/).

For details of NERC data centres, see the [NERC Environmental Data Service](https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/facilities-and-resources/find-a-nerc-facility-or-resource/).

We will pay the NERC data centre directly for archival and curation services, but you should ensure that you request sufficient resource to cover preparation of data for archiving by your research team. Additional services from the data centres, such as database development or a specialist in project data management during your project, must be discussed with the relevant data centre prior to submission and the costs included in your application.

Where other specific types of data are also collected, you must refer to relevant council guidance for archiving such specific data.

### Services and facilities

You can apply to use a facility or resource in your funding application.

You should discuss your application with the facility or service at least two months before the funding opportunity’s closing date to:

* discuss the proposed work in detail
* receive confirmation that they can provide the services required within the timeframe of the funding

The facility will provide a technical assessment that includes the calculated cost of providing the service. UKRI services and facilities must be costed within the limits of the funding.

You should not submit the technical assessment with the application, but you must confirm you have received it.

Read the full list of [NERC facilities that require a technical assessment](https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/facilities-and-resources/find-a-nerc-facility-or-resource/).

High Performance Computing (HPC) and the large research facilities at Harwell have their own policies for access and costing.

### Responsible research

Through our funding processes, we seek to make a positive contribution to society and the environment. This is not just through research outputs and outcomes but through the way in which research is conducted and facilities managed.

All NERC grant holders are to adopt responsible research practices as set out in the [UKRI-NERC Responsible Business Statement](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/nerc/our-policies-and-standards/nerc-as-a-responsible-business/).

Responsible research is defined as reducing harm or enhancing benefit on the environment and society through effective management of research activities and facilities. Specifically, this covers:

* the natural environment
* the local community
* equality, diversity and inclusion

You should consider the responsible research context of your project, not the host institution as a whole. You should take action to enhance your responsible research approach where practical and reasonable.

There are two stages to apply for this funding opportunity:

* notification of intent
* full application

### Notification of intent

A notification of intent (NoI) is a mandatory requirement for this funding opportunity.

Full applications submitted without a prior NoI will be rejected.

You should include:

* your name
* your international partners
* the main research areas of your work

[Submit your notification of intent](https://reg.nerc.ac.uk/ssa-noi/).

As soon as you have submitted your NoI, you can submit your full application.

You will not be contacted following your NoI. This does not mean we will not reject your full application if it is deemed out of scope or otherwise ineligible.

### Full application

We are running this funding opportunity on the new UKRI Funding Service. You cannot apply on the Joint Electronic Submissions (Je-S) system.

The project lead is responsible for completing the application process on the Funding Service, but we expect all team members and project partners to contribute to the application.

Only the lead research organisation can submit an application to UKRI.

To apply:

1. Select ‘Start application’ near the beginning of this page.
2. Confirm you are the project lead.
3. Sign in or create a Funding Service account. To create an account, select your organisation, verify your email address, and set a password. If your organisation is not listed, email [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org)
4. Answer questions directly in the text boxes. You can save your answers and come back to them, or work offline and return to copy and paste your answers. All questions and assessment criteria are listed in the ‘How to apply’ section on this Funding finder page.
5. Send the completed application to your research office for checking. They will return it to you if it needs editing.
6. Your research office will submit the completed and checked application to UKRI.

Watch our [research office webinars about the new UKRI Funding Service](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/improving-your-funding-experience/about-simpler-and-better-funding/).

### Deadlines

You must [submit a short notification of intent](http://reg.nerc.ac.uk/ssa-noi/) by 27 July 2023 at 4:00pm UK time.

We must receive your full application by 13 September 2023 at 4:00pm UK time.

You will not be able to apply after this time.

Make sure you are aware of and follow any internal institutional deadlines.

### Personal data

#### Processing personal data

NERC, as part of UKRI, will need to collect some personal information to manage your funding service account and the registration of your funding applications.

We will handle personal data in line with UK data protection legislation and manage it securely. For more information, including how to exercise your rights, read our [privacy notice](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/privacy-notice/).

#### Publication of outcomes

We will publish the outcomes of this funding opportunity on [What NERC has funded](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/what-we-have-funded/nerc/).

If your application is successful, some personal information will be published via the [UKRI Gateway to Research](https://gtr.ukri.org/).

### UKRI Funding Service: section guidance

#### Summary

Word count: 550

In plain English, provide a summary that will be viewed by assessors.

This summary may be made publicly available on external facing websites, so ensure it can be understood by a variety of readers, for example:

* opinion-formers
* policymakers
* the general public
* the wider research community.

Succinctly describe your proposed work in terms of:

* its context
* the challenge the project addresses and how it will be applied to this
* its aims and objectives
* its potential applications and benefits

#### Applicants

List the key members of your team and assign them roles, for example:

* project lead (PL)
* project co-lead (UK) (PcL)
* project co-lead (international) (PcL (I))
* researcher co-lead
* specialist
* grant manager
* professional enabling staff
* research and innovation associate
* technician
* visiting researcher

You can only list one project lead.

The PcL(I) role should only be used for SSA project co-leads and applications making use of the [UKRI-RCN Money Follows Cooperation agreement](https://www.ukri.org/opportunity/collaborate-with-researchers-in-norway/) or the [UKRI-IIASA agreement](https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/). NERC does not otherwise accept PcL(I) applicants.

Find out more about [UKRI’s new grant roles](https://www.ukri.org/publications/roles-in-funding-applications/).

#### Section: Official Development Assistance (ODA) Statement

Word count: 500

Question: How does your proposed work meet ODA compliance eligibility?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

To demonstrate how your proposed work meets [ODA compliance criteria](https://www.oecd.org/development/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/officialdevelopmentassistancedefinitionandcoverage.htm), explain:

* which country or countries on the DAC list will directly benefit from this project and whether these countries are likely to continue to be ODA eligible for the duration of the research
* how your application is directly and primarily relevant to the development challenges of these countries
* how you expect the outcomes of your proposed activities will promote the economic development and welfare of a country or countries on the DAC list
* what approaches you will use to deliver development impact within the lifetime of the project and in the longer term

You should consider:

* potential outcomes
* key beneficiary and stakeholder groups
* how you will engage key groups to enable development impact

#### Section: Gender Equality Statement

Word count: 500

Question: How does your proposed work contribute to reducing inequality between people of different genders?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide a Gender Equality Statement that explains:

* what measures have been put in place to ensure equal and meaningful opportunities for people of different genders to be involved throughout the project; this includes the development of the project, the participants of the research and the beneficiaries of the research
* the expected impact of the project (benefits and losses) on people of different genders, both throughout the project and beyond
* the impact on the relations between people of different genders and people of the same gender; for example, changing roles and responsibilities in households, society, economy, politics, power
* how any risks and unintended negative consequences on gender equality will be avoided or mitigated against, and monitored
* whether there are any relevant outcomes and outputs being measured, with data disaggregated by age and gender (where disclosed)

#### Section: Vision and Approach

Word count: 5

You should upload the Vision and Approach document to the Funding Service as a six-page PDF. The document must have single line spacing, margins of at least 2cm and be typed using Arial 11pt, or another ‘sans serif’ font with an equivalent size to Arial 11pt.

What are you hoping to achieve with and how will you deliver your proposed work?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

For the Vision, explain how your proposed work:

* is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the fields or areas
* has the potential to advance current understanding, generates new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area
* is timely given current trends, context and needs
* impacts world-leading research, society, the economy or the environment

Within the Vision section we also expect you to:

* identify the potential direct or indirect benefits and who the beneficiaries might be
* describe how your application addresses the priority themes
* demonstrate how issues of equity, as outlined in the opportunity scope in the What we are looking for section, are built into your research (as opposed to building an equitable partnership)
* describe how your project addresses issues of temporal sustainability, as described in the opportunity scope

For the Approach, explain how you have designed your work so that it:

* is effective and appropriate to achieve your objectives
* is feasible, and comprehensively identifies any risks to delivery and how they will be managed
* if applicable, uses a clear and transparent methodology
* if applicable, summarises the previous work and describes how this will be built upon and progressed
* will maximise translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts
* describes how your, and if applicable your team’s, research environment (in terms of the place, its location, and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the work
* delivers an equitable partnership between UK and SSA researchers, including equitable distribution of resources, responsibilities, efforts, and benefits
* encourages capacity development as part of, and not separate to, the stated research approach

Within the Approach section we also expect you to:

* demonstrate access to the appropriate services, facilities, infrastructure, or equipment to deliver the proposed work
* provide a detailed and comprehensive project plan including milestones and timelines in the form of a Gantt chart or similar (additional one-page A4)

The Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply.

#### Section: Applicant and team capability to deliver

Word count: 1,500

Why are you the right individual or team to successfully deliver the proposed work?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Evidence of how you, and if relevant your team, have:

* the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to deliver the proposed work
* the right balance of skills and expertise to cover the proposed work
* the appropriate leadership and management skills to deliver the work and your approach to develop others
* contributed to developing the positive research environment and wider community

The word count for this section is 1,500 words – 1,000 words to be used for R4RI modules and, if necessary, a further 500 words for Additions.

Use the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) format to showcase the range of relevant skills you, and if relevant your team (

project lead and project co-leads, researchers, other (technical) staff for example research software engineers, data scientists and so on, and project partners), have and how this will help to deliver the proposed work. You can include individuals’ specific achievements but only choose past contributions that best evidence their ability to deliver this work.

Complete this section using the R4RI module headings listed. You should use each heading once and include a response for the whole team, see the [UKRI guidance on R4RI](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/resume-for-research-and-innovation-r4ri-guidance/). You should consider how to balance your answer, and emphasise where appropriate the key skills each team member brings:

* contributions to the generation of new ideas, tools, methodologies, or knowledge
* the development of others and maintenance of effective working relationships
* contributions to the wider research and innovation community
* contributions to broader research or innovation users and audiences and towards wider societal benefit

Additions: Provide any further details relevant to your application. This section is optional and can be up to 500 words. You should not use it to describe additional skills, experiences or outputs, but any factors that provide context for the rest of your R4RI (for example, details of career breaks if you wish to disclose them).

You should complete this as a narrative and you should avoid CV type format.

UKRI has introduced new role types for funding opportunities being run on UKRI’s new Funding Service from 22 May 2023.

For full details, visit [Eligibility as an individual](https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-research-and-innovation-funding/eligibility-as-an-individual/#contents-list).

#### Section: Project partners

Word count: 500

Provide details about any project partners’ contributions using the template provided.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Download and complete the [project partner contributions template (DOCX, 52KB)](https://ukri-tfs-prod-assets.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Project-partner-contributions-template.docx).

The UKRI Funding Service will provide document upload details when you apply. If you do not have any project partners, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

Ensure you have obtained prior agreement from project partners that, should you be offered funding, they will support your project as indicated in the template.

#### Section: Data management and sharing

Word count: 500

How will you manage and share data collected or acquired through the proposed research?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Provide an outline data management plan clearly detailing how you will comply with [NERC’s data policy](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/nerc/our-policies-and-standards/nerc-data-policy/), which includes detailed guidance notes.

Indicate:

* which NERC data centre is required to archive the data
* whether the total volume of data is likely to be larger than 1TB
* any other detail on how you will comply with NERC data policy

Where other specific types of data are also collected, you must refer to relevant council guidance for archiving such specific data and explain here how that data will be managed.

#### Section: Ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI)

Word count: 1,000

What are the ethical or RRI implications and issues relating to the proposed work?  If you do not think that the proposed work raises any ethical or RRI issues, explain why.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Demonstrate that you have identified and evaluated:

* the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations
* how you will manage these considerations

You should also detail:

* how you will identify and manage safeguarding risks
* what policies and procedures will be in place to enable reporting and investigation of allegations should they arise

If you are collecting or using data, you should identify:

* any legal and ethical considerations of collecting, releasing or storing the data including consent, confidentiality, anonymisation, security and other ethical considerations and, in particular, strategies taken to not preclude further reuse of data
* formal information standards with which your study will comply

#### Section: References

Word count: 300

List the references you have used to support your application.

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Include all references in this section, not in the rest of the application questions.

You should not include any other information in this section.

We advise you not to include hyperlinks, as assessors are not obliged to access the information they lead to or consider it in their assessment of your application.

If linking to web resources, to maintain the information’s integrity, include persistent identifiers (such as digital object identifiers) where possible.

You must not include links to web resources to extend your application.

#### Section: Facilities

Word count: 2,000

Does your proposed research require the support and use of a facility?

If you will need to use a facility, follow your proposed facility’s normal access request procedures. Ensure you have prior agreement so that if you are offered funding, they will support the use of their facility on your project.

For each requested facility you will need to provide the:

* name of facility, copied and pasted from the [facility information list (DOCX, 35KB)](https://ukri-tfs-prod-assets.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/Facility+Information+for+TFS.docx)
* proposed usage or costs, or costs per unit where indicated on the facility information list
* confirmation you have their agreement where required

If you will not need to use a facility, you will be able to indicate this in the Funding Service.

#### Section: Resources and cost justification

Word count: 1,000

Question: What will you need to deliver your proposed work and how much will it cost?

##### What the assessors are looking for in your response

Demonstrate how the resources you anticipate needing for your proposed work:

* are comprehensive, appropriate, and justified
* represent the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes
* maximise potential outcomes and impacts

Costings should be justified on the basis of [full economic costs (FEC)](https://www.ukri.org/councils/epsrc/guidance-for-applicants/costs-you-can-apply-for/principles-of-full-economic-costing-fec/) of the project, not just on the costs expected from UKRI. For some items we do not expect you to justify the monetary value, rather the type of resource, such as amount of time or type of staff requested.

This should not simply be a list of the resources requested – when applying on the UKRI Funding Service, you will be able to use the Resources and cost summary table for high-level costs.

Where you do not provide adequate justification for a resource, we may deduct it from any funding awarded.

You should identify:

* support for activities to either increase impact, for public engagement, knowledge exchange or to support responsible innovation
* support for access to facilities, infrastructure or procurement of equipment
* support for preserving, long-term storage, or sharing of data
* support from your organisation or partner organisations and how that enhances value for money

### Assessment process

We will assess your application using the following process.

#### Panel

NERC, on behalf of UKRI and FCDO will be convening an assessment panel, comprised of relevant experts from a range of disciplines based in the UK and Sub-Saharan Africa. The panel members will individually assess the applications assigned to them and their comments will be returned to you for your response.

You will then have 14 calendar days to compile and return an applicant response.

Note the applicant response dates in the funding opportunity timeline. This is a fixed date with no option to extend or alter it.

Your application and applicant response will then be re-considered by the assigned panel members before all panel members will collectively discuss and review all applications.

The panel will assign a score to your application, rank it alongside other applications and make a funding recommendation.

NERC will work with other councils and FCDO to make the final funding decision.

#### Feedback

We will give feedback with the outcome of your application.

### Principles of assessment

We support the San Francisco [declaration on research assessment (DORA)](https://sfdora.org/read/) and recognise the relationship between research assessment and research integrity.

Find out about the [UKRI Principles of Assessment and Decision Making](https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-principles-of-assessment-and-decision-making/).

We reserve the right to modify the assessment process as needed.

### Assessment criteria

#### Areas of assessment

The criteria against which your application will be assessed directly relates to the application questions as follows:

* vision of the project
* approach to the project
* applicant and team capability to deliver
* ethics and responsible research and innovation
* Gender Equality Statement
* Official Development Assistance (ODA) Statement

Further detail on what the assessors are looking for is available in the questions in the How to apply section.

### Get help with your application

For help on costings and writing your application, contact your research office. Allow enough time for your organisation’s submission process.

### Ask about this funding opportunity

Email: [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org)

We aim to respond to emails within two working days.

Phone: 01793 547490

Our phone lines are open:

* Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5:00pm
* Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

### Sensitive information

If you, or a key team member, need to tell us something you wish to remain confidential, email the Funding Service helpdesk at [support@funding-service.ukri.org](mailto:support@funding-service.ukri.org)

Include in the subject line: NERC Equitable nature-based climate resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa, sensitive information, [your Funding Service application number]

Typical examples of confidential information include:

* applicant is unavailable until a certain date (for example due to parental leave)
* declaration of interest
* additional information about eligibility to apply that would not be appropriately shared in the Applicant and team capability section
* conflict of interest for UKRI to consider in reviewer or panel participant selection

For information about how UKRI handles personal data, see [UKRI’s privacy notice](https://www.ukri.org/about-us/privacy-notice/).

### Webinar for potential applicants

We held a webinar on 23 June 2023 to provide more information about the funding opportunity and a chance to ask questions.

[Watch webinar recording on Zoom](https://ukri.zoom.us/rec/share/5IqK3DP0YDEYPxMH0pefHXXXb86kPOgRhN8Hb5bSJ5w9x6PokGjWAikk7CMCAoY.Oa65iWdkbTPk37I5) (passcode: %c@V%w8F)

### Partnership building workshop

We will hold an online partnership building workshop in the morning of 5 July 2023. This will provide an opportunity for UK and SSA-based researchers and stakeholders to find new potential partners, through sharing their respective expertise and research interests and identifying areas for collaboration.

[Register your interest in attending the workshop](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nature-based-solutions-partnership-workshop-tickets-642947010817) by the end of Friday 30 June.

If you have any queries about either event, contact the programme mailbox: [NatureBasedSolutions@nerc.ukri.org](mailto:NatureBasedSolutions@nerc.ukri.org)

### Background

Discussions with the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office) in relation to two new large scale FCDO-led initiatives [CLARE](https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300126/summary) and [REDAA](https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300760/summary) identified shared interests in NbS, with Africa as a priority beneficiary country.

NERC on behalf of UKRI has worked in partnership with FCDO, the [Adaptation Research Alliance](https://www.adaptationresearchalliance.org/) and academic teams based in the UK and SSA to scope and co-design this transdisciplinary research programme in consultation with a variety of key actors.

This programme will build upon a suite of previous joint climate-change related research programmes delivered in partnership with FCDO, for example, [SHEAR](https://shear.org.uk/home.html), [FCFA](https://futureclimateafrica.org/), [UpGro](https://upgro.org/) and [ESPA](https://www.espa.ac.uk/). Recent developments in understanding how climate risks vary across SSA provide opportunities to develop more context-specific and equitable NbS, that can provide multiple benefits to vulnerable ecosystems and people’s lives and livelihoods.

NERC has funded a small number of projects related to NbS but these are predominantly UK-focused including the [Natural Flood Management (NFM)](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/understanding-the-effectiveness-of-natural-flood-management/) and [Changing the Environment](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/changing-the-environment/) programmes. So far, synthesis of NbS research has concentrated on the Global North despite numerous NbS interventions and multilateral projects in the Global South, with a dominant focus on global benefits of carbon sequestration. The programme will focus on supporting climate adaptation in SSA and complement a number of existing non-UKRI initiatives in this space.

This opportunity is supported through two of the five UKRI Strategic Themes – specifically ‘[Building a Green Future](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/building-a-green-future/)’ (BaGF) and ‘[Building a Secure and Resilient World](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/browse-our-areas-of-investment-and-support/building-a-secure-and-resilient-world/)’ (BaSRW). The programme aligns with the aims of BaSRW to “strengthen the UK’s role in shaping an international order that is secure, resilient and just”, “reduce the impact of shocks on individuals and communities through adaptation” and “taking a systemic approach that is human-centred, aimed at strengthening societal and economic resilience”.

Enhanced implementation of NbS will help to meet the BaGF goals around development of multidisciplinary solutions necessary for meeting our net zero targets. The programme is “working in partnership with government (FCDO) to co-create research and innovation programmes that address green growth”, with environmental benefits for biodiversity and land use. It will “build capability to address fundamental problems of net zero including through equitable partnerships” and “leverage UK research and innovation through international collaboration.”

The programme will address several [NERC Delivery Plan](https://www.ukri.org/publications/nerc-strategic-delivery-plan/) ambitions, the most relevant being to “embed environmental science within UKRI’s Strategic Themes…and ensure an environmental component to human wellbeing” (E.1.) and “determine the effectiveness and accelerate the adoption of nature-based solutions…” (E.3.).

### Wider funding landscape

UKRI are working together with other UK government departments to enable greater coordination and coherence across research programmes that aim to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises to benefit both people and nature in the Global South. We are designing programmes to be complementary in scope and identifying opportunities to add value and maximise collective impact through post-award management.

[Climate Adaptation and Resilience (CLARE)](https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300126/summary) is a £110 million UK-Canada initiative aiming to enable socially inclusive and sustainable action to build resilience to climate change and natural hazards. CLARE-supported adaptation research links up short- and long-term issues, providing a better understanding of the risks associated with climate, supporting early action to reduce impacts of climate variability while enabling long-term, sustainable and equitable economic and social development in a changing climate.

[Reversing Environmental Degradation in Africa and Asia (REDAA)](https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/projects/GB-GOV-1-300760/summary) is a £35 million development programme catalysing research, innovation and action across SSA and South and Southeast Asia, through a series of competitive grant funding opportunities. It is funded by the FCDO and implemented by the International Institute for Environment and Development.

Grants will fund work that is interdisciplinary, often locally led and focused on solutions for ecosystem restoration and wildlife protection, enabling people and nature to thrive together in times of climate, resource and fiscal insecurity. REDAA is launching its first research funding opportunity in June 2023.

[Global Centre on Biodiversity for Climate (GCBC)](https://www.gcbc.org.uk/home) is a £40 million research and development programme that delivers research, evidence and data to support countries in the Global South to better value, protect, restore and sustainably use biodiversity to tackle climate change and poverty.

Funded by the [Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs) and delivered through a ‘hub’ comprising Kew Gardens as the Strategic Science Lead and DAI Global as the programme’s management lead, the GCBC seeks to establish a virtual network of UK and international research institutions and experts focused on tackling critical research gaps to understand how biodiversity can help us adapt to our changing climate, create solutions to mitigate its impact, and support new green economic opportunities.

An interim research strategy is currently in development that will identify priority research themes and form the basis for the forthcoming research grant funding opportunity due towards the end of May 2023.

### Our commitment to the principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms which deprive a person of their liberty in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain, such as:

* slavery
* servitude
* human trafficking
* forced and compulsory labour

We are committed to the principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, and the abolition of modern slavery and human trafficking.

### Research disruption due to COVID-19

We recognise that the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major interruptions and disruptions across our communities. We are committed to ensuring that individual applicants and their wider team, including partners and networks, are not penalised for any disruption to their career, such as:

* breaks and delays
* disruptive working patterns and conditions
* the loss of ongoing work
* role changes that may have been caused by the pandemic

Reviewers and panel members will be advised to consider the unequal impacts that COVID-19 related disruption might have had on the capability to deliver and career development of those individuals included in the application. They will be asked to consider the capability of the applicant and their wider team to deliver the research they are proposing.

Where disruptions have occurred, you can highlight this within your application if you wish, but there is no requirement to detail the specific circumstances that caused the disruption.