**University of Aberdeen**

**NERC**

**Pushing the Frontiers (PtF) – Pipeline Form**

We are interested in hearing from you and supporting your ideas for a future **ABERDEEN-LED** NERC PtF application. NERC imposes a dynamic CAP (based on our success rate over the previous 6 rounds) on the number of proposals we can submit in any given round of the PtF scheme. The NERC Internal Demand Management Panel (N-IDMP) are thus tasked with identifying and supporting the most competitive proposals for this scheme.

For Aberdeen led proposals, before submitting the **Pipeline Form** (**PF** - below) you should have already had discussions:

SBS – within your relevant Research Clusters.

SoG – with the DoR and/or presented at, and had feedback from, a lunchtime sandpit.

For other Schools please liaise with the Grants Academy to identify who best to discuss your ideas with.

The N-IDMP require the following information to initiate the formal entering of your proposal into the Pipeline to facilitate a meaningful evaluation of the idea and ensure that appropriate advice, support and guidance can be given. You should familiarise yourself with the timeline for the N-IDMP milestones, found at the end of this document, as some of these are fixed and must be adhered to. This may seem draconian but please remember we are all pressed for time. The N-IDMP (and internal peer reviewers) require sufficient time, in advance of the meetings, to read, digest and prepare their reviews on the proposals. This is required to give everyone equal treatment and ensures we can best target our support.

**NERC - Pushing the Frontiers – Pipeline** (entry/continuation) **Form**

Qs 1-7 x1 page and Q8 x1 page maximum (total length x 2 sides A4)

1. Where/with whom have you discussed this proposal (see above)? Include if it was viewed by the N-IDMP previously.
2. Full Team listing:
3. Working title of the application:
4. The Applicant and team capability to deliver – outline you have:
* the relevant experience (appropriate to career stage) to deliver the proposed work
* the right balance of skills and expertise
* the appropriate leadership and management skills and your approach to develop others
1. Ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI) – outline:
* the relevant ethical and **responsible research and innovation considerations** (do not ignore the second bit in bold – the NERC panel doesn’t!)
* how you will manage these considerations
1. If you require access to any Internal or External facilities please indicate those you might need - <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/facilities/list/> or [university facilities](https://abdn.pure.elsevier.com/en/equipments/)
2. Describe the staffing resources required e.g. 1 x PDRAs (a detailed financial breakdown is not required at this stage) and **indicative** overall budget (<£800k, <£800k-1M; £1-2M).
3. Summary of Grant Proposal (maximum of one page of A4, Arial 11, 2cm margins) under the two headings used for proposal assessments by NERC Pushing the Frontiers Panels.

**Vision (demonstrate)**:

• importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)

• timeliness given current trends, context, and needs

• how it will impact world-leading research, society, the economy, or the environment

• potential direct or indirect benefits and beneficiaries.

**Approach (identify)**:

• objectives

• any risks and how they will be managed

• a clear and transparent methodology (including WPs)

• translation of outputs into outcomes and impacts

• how the team’s, research environment will contribute to the success of the work

• access to the appropriate services/facilities/infrastructure/equipment.

**N-IDMP: Operating Procedures and Timeline**

NERC Pushing the Frontiers calls are in mid-January and mid-July.

**Prior to the submission of the Pipeline Form (PF) you should have informally discussed your idea to assess:** competitiveness, fit to scheme, suitable methods, appropriate collaborators (internal and external) etc. Within the two main NERC Schools (SBS and SoG) this should be done:

* SBS - within clusters
* SoG - via a twice-yearly sandpit/discussion (within the Informal Research Lunch meetings) and/or in discussion with DoR/relevant SoG-IDMP panel member/s.
* For other Schools liaise with the Grants Academy to identify who best to discuss your ideas with.

**Timeline: PF** to be submitted by **1st March** i.e. at least 2 weeks before Panel-1 meeting. If it is a resubmission please complete the PF indicating how N-IDMP/NERC Panel feedback has been addressed.

**Panel-1 meeting**

**20th March:** in-person meeting with a 10 min presentation followed by 10-15 min discussion.

**Outcome: Stop / Continue / Go:**

* **Stop:** feedback: e.g. not NERC/not a Pushing the Frontiers idea/rethink and re-direct to another funding scheme.
* **Continue:** development for NEXT Panel-1, specifically for early-stage proposals (feedback will be provided). An updated **PF** from should be submitted for return to the N-IDMP.
* **Go:** feedback and recommendations plus identification of internal peer reviewers (agreed by the panel and applicant). A full draft is then **REQUIRED** two weeks before the Panel-2 meeting for the panel and peer reviewers. If the deadline is **MISSED** then **POSTPONE** until Panel-2 for the next round. **PLEASE START WORKTRIBE FROM NOW!**

**Panel-2 meeting**

**5th June** – in-person meeting with a brief update on status of the proposal (project lead). Reviewers and Panel present their feedback with further discussion on the recommendations and timeline for completion (if warranted).

**Outcome: Stop / Continue / Go:**

* **Stop:** feedback on how to proceed e.g. abandon, another funding scheme etc. (this is an unlikely outcome)
* **Continue (develop for the next round):** further developments required for the next Panel-2 deadline are identified (e.g. new data, demonstration of an example, more detail needed, stronger team, gaps plugged etc) and support given where necessary/possible. **Guaranteed** progression to Panel-2 in the next round but updated **PF** required.
* **Go:** Proposal is cleared and should go ahead to full submission. Further support is given by peer reviewers.