



LANDSCAPE DECISIONS POLICY INTERFACE FELLOWS 2021 CALL FOR PROPOSALS

NERC is inviting proposals for Landscape Decisions fellowships as part of the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund Landscape Decisions programme.

PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

[The Landscape Decisions Programme “Towards a new framework for using land assets”](#) is addressing the challenge of delivering better, evidence-based decisions within UK landscapes through research collaboration with policy, business, and land management partners to deliver an interdisciplinary decision-making framework to inform how land is used.

The programme is supported on behalf of UK Research & Innovation (UKRI) by NERC, the Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC), the Biotechnology & Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC) and the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Additional background can be found at <https://nerc.ukri.org/research/funded/programmes/landscape/>

POLICY INTERFACE FELLOWSHIPS SCOPE

The Policy Interface Fellowships aim to achieve the following objectives:

- To support the integration of research on the theme of Landscape Decision making into policy
- To interpret and embed the solutions and innovations developed by Landscape Decision Programme [projects](#) for use in a policy context

Challenges that could be addressed include but are not limited to:

- Improving the understanding and uptake of research outputs in policymaking
- Developing new methods to ensure that future research meets the demands of policy makers and that policy makers understand the needs of the research community
- Developing methods to improve the way multi- and inter-disciplinary research arising from the Landscape Decisions Programme is synthesised and presented to policy makers.

Fellows will be required to focus on working to ensure that interdisciplinary research and policy interfaces are improved both for the current Landscape Decisions programme projects and for possible future research in the area of landscape decisions as this is a 'gap' that has been identified during the Programme.

Fellows will receive career development support from the Landscape Decisions Programme in collaboration with the UK Government Open Innovation Team (OIT) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-with-the-open-innovation-team>

By the end of the fellowship, fellows will have to deliver a **policy interface report** on their chosen area of improvement for publication and dissemination to international, national, regional, and local government and other policy stakeholders via the Landscape Decisions Programme web site, and collaboration with other organisations such as the OIT. In addition, each person will have delivered at least one policy interface event at international, national, regional, or local level, and will be actively encouraged to produce further academic outputs as appropriate

Policy interface activities should review current methods and offer insights from different government departments and various levels of government in the UK (national, regional, and local), and, where appropriate, learn from international examples and best practice, if it is relevant to the UK context. Activities should also be relevant to the Landscape Decisions portfolio of projects and reflect on ways that both government and the research community can better work together given the different timelines and priorities involved.

The fellows will be expected to coordinate their activities (including data management activities if relevant) with the [Landscape Decisions Programme Coordination Team](#).

All fellows will be expected to actively engage with the Landscape Decisions Programme activities and interact with each other through dedicated meetings of all fellows.

ELIGIBILITY

Fellowship applications for the Policy Interface scheme are open to applicants of all nationalities who have the right to live and work in the UK. Applicants do not need to be currently receiving or have received funding from the Landscape Decisions Programme.

Applicants can hold a position where they would be eligible to apply as a principal or co-investigator for a UKRI grant on full-time or a percentage of their full-time equivalent (FTE), however the Fellow should aim to complete by the end of January 2023.

Applicants can be at an earlier career stage and not yet be eligible as a principal or co-investigator for UKRI grants and may apply for up to 100% of their time through this fellowship.

Applicants do not need a PhD. However, current PhD students are expected to have submitted their thesis before taking up the fellowship.

Investigators may only be involved in **one** proposal submitted to this opportunity.

Fellowship grants may be held at:

- approved UK higher education institutions (HEIs)
- approved research council institutes (RCI's)
- independent research organisations (IROs)
- public sector research establishments. (PSREs)
- [Check your organisation is eligible for funding.](#)

Prospective applicants should check the eligibility status of their host organisation, further questions can be addressed to landscapes@leicester.ac.uk

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI)

The Landscape Decisions Programme and UKRI are committed to creating and sustaining a positive, fair and inclusive environment for our research community to ensure that all feel welcomed, included and valued.

We seek to achieve a high level of diversity within the Landscape Decisions community, and we therefore encourage applications from all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria from all backgrounds, regardless of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins)
- religion or belief
- sex or sexual orientation
- neurodiversity
- socioeconomic background
- any other relevant factor.

We warmly welcome applications from individuals who may have undertaken non-standard or non-typical research careers pre- or post-PhD prior to application.

BUDGET AND DURATION

The full economic cost of your project must be no more than £70,000. We will fund 80% of cost. Equipment costs will not be eligible under this call, and applicants should budget sufficient resources in their application for 4 UK-based one-day meetings and associated T&S

The budget section of the application and budget form should be prepared in conjunction with the host organisation that will hold the contract.

This scheme is administered by the Landscape Decisions Programme Coordination Team on behalf of NERC. Successful awards will be issued as contracts from the University of Leicester to the organisation where the fellowship will be held and will NOT be part of the research council Je-S system. The awards will follow the standard [UKRI grant terms and conditions](#) except where variation is justified for the purpose of processing payments via contracts.

LINKING WITH LANDSCAPE DECISIONS SPF PROGRAMME COORDINATION TEAM, GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT AND CONSTITUENT PROJECTS

All Landscape Decisions Fellows will be required to collaborate with one or more government departments from one or more national, regional, or local government departments, and cooperate with at least one project currently within the Landscape Decisions Programme.

Refer to [Grants on the Web](#) and the [Landscape Decisions Programme website](#) for list of all individual Projects/Pis in the programme.

Potential applicants should aim to contact at least one Landscape Decisions PI by contacting the Landscape Decisions Programme Coordination Team (PCT) at (landscapes@le.ac.uk). The PCT will provide an overview of projects and introductions to PI's. Potential applicants should provide a brief description of their planned work as a Landscape Decisions Fellow to help facilitate this introduction.

APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Each fellowship application will need to be completed by downloading this [application form](#) and the accompanying [diversity monitoring form](#). If you have difficulty in downloading the form you can contact us and request one at landscapes@leicester.ac.uk, once completed the forms should be emailed to the Landscape Decisions PCT at landscapes@leicester.ac.uk, clearly marking the subject of the email **Landscape Decisions Policy Interface Fellowship Application**

Applications will go through a two-stage assessment process:

1. an assessment sift by a panel from the Landscape Decisions Programme Coordination team (PCT)
2. interview by the same panel.

The PCT is composed of members with relevant expertise, ensuring a balance of different perspectives, disciplines, expertise, and affiliations, with diversity in mind. If applicants are based within the University of Leicester the panel will include independent members from outside Leicester to ensure fair and open competition.

Applicants will be given brief feedback from the panel, summarising the reasons why the proposal was unsuccessful in being invited to interview. Feedback will be provided to all those invited to interview after the interview panel.

NERC will use the recommendations of the interview panel along with the overall funding opportunity requirements and the available budget to make the final funding decisions.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. Quality of the proposed policy interface activity
2. Fit to programme and call objectives
3. Feasibility of plans for engagement with government departments at international, national, regional, or local level
4. Suitability of the applicant

The assessment will look for relevance of applicant's experience to the proposal and their approach:

- recognised to be of high standard (skills and capabilities) relative to their career stage
- a broad understanding of the value of research/policy interface
- demonstrate an ability to engage effectively, build partnerships, be a clear communicator, and be able to deliver research information to non-research audiences
- demonstrate an ability to develop and mature new relationships and influence across multiple disciplines and sectors
- demonstrate how they will use the fellowship for personal development.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

In addition to providing a final Policy Interface Report as outlined above, fellows will be expected to provide quarterly reports to the Programme Coordination Team (PCT), and engage with the current fellows in monthly meetings where progress and learnings can be shared.

TIMETABLE

Full proposal submission deadline: 12 noon on 14 **March 2022**

Sift panel: Thursday 14th April 2022

Interview panel: Thursday 5th May 2022

Latest project start date: **June 2022**

CONTACTS

For all enquiries regarding this funding opportunity or about the Landscape Decisions Programme more generally, please contact landscapes@leicester.ac.uk

