

An opportunity for researchers based in the United Kingdom to apply for funding to support practical research and engagement with the work of the Arctic Council's Working Groups, and the priorities and initiatives of the Norwegian Chairship 2023-25.

**PLEASE NOTE: Deadline for this scheme has been extended to Friday 19th April 2024.**

## **Background**

The Arctic Council is the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation in the Arctic. As the Arctic Council Chair, Norway is actively pursuing an ambitious programme for their Chairship (2023-25). Arctic Council details: <https://arctic-council.org/>

The United Kingdom has been an Observer to the Arctic Council since 1998. Researchers based in the UK have contributed extensively to the work of the six Working Groups and associated Expert Groups and Taskforces over many years, sharing expertise, working in partnership, collaborating on new data sources and conducting important analysis.

In recognition of the importance of the work of the Arctic Council, and the potential for increased engagement by researchers based in the United Kingdom, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology is now funding a new scheme in 2024-25. This will support researchers in practical engagement with the re-established work programmes of the six Arctic Council Working Groups and the priorities and initiatives of the Norwegian Chairship of the Arctic Council.

The aims of the scheme are to:

- support the active and effective resumption of work of projects across the six Arctic Council Working Groups and beyond;
- provide valuable opportunities for UK-based researchers to share and expand their expertise, for mutual benefit; and
- support the UK's role as a committed and active Observer to the Arctic Council addressing priorities of joint benefit.

The scheme is being delivered in active partnership with the NERC Arctic Office and the UK Science Innovation Network.

A first summary of Arctic Council projects is available [here](#) for information which reflects the latest status of work across the Council's six Working Groups and the EGBCM as of the end of 2023.

## **Initial Stages**

An online information and networking session was held in early December to share information on the current status of projects and activities within Working

Groups; and networking opportunities for researchers to talk directly to representatives of the Working Groups and others to identify areas for potential cooperation. The session was supported by the Arctic Council Secretariat and representatives of each of the six Arctic Council Working Groups.

There was also an opportunity to submit an expression of interest to receive funding support to attend the Arctic Frontiers conference in Tromsø between 29 January and 1 February 2024. Successful applicants will be participating in the meeting and a joint UK-Norway-Arctic Council session to share information and ideas, and specifically to build on the previous online information and networking session. Other attendees at the conference and the UK-Norway session will be welcome.

Information on the Arctic Frontiers conference is here: <https://arcticfrontiers.com/2024-action-reaction/>.

Prior participation in the information and networking session or attending the Arctic Frontiers meeting is **NOT** a requirement to submit an application to this Scheme.

## **Application Details**

### Scheme Eligibility

Applicants must be based in the UK. They should be employed at a university, research centre or other institution which is eligible to apply for and receive UKRI-NERC funding. Eligible researchers will usually be in permanent or longer-term contract positions.

The scheme is aimed at early career as well as established researchers and applications from newly established permanent contract researchers are welcome. PhD students will not be eligible as the main applicant but may be included in wider teams, as appropriate.

Applications from researchers from groups who are traditionally under-represented in Arctic science will be especially welcome. No prior specific experience of engagement with the work of the Arctic Council Working Groups is required.

Researchers are strongly encouraged to develop meaningful partnerships with colleagues from Arctic States and non-Arctic Observer States as part of their application but this is not a requirement.

Applicants who have previously worked with or supported the work of the Arctic Council Working Groups are encouraged to apply, identifying the additional value that their new proposal will bring.

### Research and Engagement Areas

The scheme is available to support applications which relate to the work of each of the six Arctic Council Working Groups:

- ACAP – Arctic Contaminants Action Program
- AMAP – Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme
- CAFF – Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
- EPPR – Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response
- PAME – Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment
- SDWG – Sustainable Development Working Group

The scheme can also support applications for priorities which cross the boundaries of different Working Groups – such as the Wildland Fires [Wildland Fire | Arctic Council \(arctic-council.org\)](#) project as well as the work of Expert Groups such as that on Black Carbon and Methane.

Details of the work of the individual Working Groups can be found here: [Working Groups | Arctic Council \(arctic-council.org\)](#). A list of individual projects across all of the Groups is available here: [Projects | Arctic Council \(arctic-council.org\)](#)

Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposal with a member of the Working Group/s secretariat to ensure that the work aligns with their proposals and work plan.

### Eligible Activity

Applicants are encouraged to be ambitious and creative in their proposals, identifying areas where their expertise, access to existing and new data, analysis re-analysis and assessment abilities, and partnerships will help meet the overall aims of the scheme.

Applications may be for work which addresses a specific research question or which is part of a wider initiative where the application will add value and impact. All funded work should be capable of being undertaken and completed in the financial year 2024-25 (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025).

Examples of eligible activity include: travel, accommodation and subsistence, purchasing/hire/use of special equipment, logistics and shipping costs, specific training and permit/access costs. Costs for areas such as analysis, laboratory time and consumables and related expenditure can all be eligible.

Where appropriate, modest travel and related subsistence costs for researchers based in Arctic States or non-Arctic Observer States who are central partners to the project can also be eligible. Such financial connections will be managed by the UK-based applicant.

Costs associated with attending general conferences may be eligible but should be a minor part of the overall costs of the application and link specifically to the stated outcomes of the application. Costs for workshops and meetings directly

associated with the delivery of the project – including meetings associated with the Working Group/s project involved – can be included.

Salary costs and associated costs for researchers, such as insurance, will not generally be eligible. Publication costs will not normally be eligible.

### Funding Levels

Eligible costs should not exceed in total £50,000. Applications for smaller sums are especially welcome. All costs will be funded at 100 percent.

### Timelines

Applications must be submitted by the extended deadline of **1600 GMT on Friday 19th April 2024**. Confirmation of receipt will be via e-mail. You must contact the NERC Arctic Office – [arctic@bas.ac.uk](mailto:arctic@bas.ac.uk) – if you do not receive confirmation of receipt.

Assessments and decisions will be made by mid-May.

All funded activity must be completed during the 2024-25 financial year (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025).

Funding will be issued to your institution from mid-May 2024 on completion of appropriate documentation.

### Data handling & storage practices and Reporting

Data handling and storage should be in line with overall UK Research and Innovation principles of data management.

A short final report will be required, in addition to responses to ad hoc requests for information and images as needed.

### **Application Process**

You are strongly encouraged to contact the NERC Arctic Office and the appropriate Arctic Council Working Group/s to discuss your proposal and eligibility at an early stage before submitting an application.

There is no specific application form. However applications must not exceed four pages A4 (12 point text). Supporting documentation such as CVs and any confirmation letters can be in addition to the four page limit.

**Applications must be submitted electronically to the NERC Arctic Office [arctic@bas.ac.uk](mailto:arctic@bas.ac.uk) by 1600 GMT on Friday 19th April 2024 in PDF format.** If you do not receive confirmation of receipt please contact the NERC Arctic Office.

The application must include:

- A proposal title and executive summary (200 words maximum)
- A description of the research or other work to be undertaken by the applicant, including details of roles and responsibilities of any co-investigators and collaborators, including those based in Arctic States or non-Arctic Observer States
- A description of the expected scientific outputs and/or other outcomes/impact of the application, including the value that the work will add to one or more projects/initiatives of the Arctic Council Working Group/s
- Confirmation from the applicant that the proposal has been shared and discussed with the relevant Arctic Council Working Group/s and that there is support for the application
- The full amount applied for, with a detailed breakdown of expected costs for the project
- Confirmation of the UK employment status of the applicant including institution and length/type of contract. This confirmation can be provided by the applicant rather than Human Resources teams.

The application should also include:

- A two-page (max.) CV containing full contact details of the applicant, including e-mail and telephone details

### **Assessment Process**

The review of applications will be undertaken by a small team, managed by the NERC Arctic Office in partnership with the UK Science and Innovation Network.

The criteria used will include the assessment of all the evidence provided and will centre on how the application meets the scheme aims set out in the Background section above. The assessment will specifically take into account:

- The practical feasibility of the proposed work within the budget and timescale outlined.
- The anticipated scientific outcome and impact, or other impact connected to the proposed work.
- The strength of support from the Arctic Council Working Group/s for the application
- The degree to which the proposed work offers the potential for a longer-term contribution to the work of the Arctic Council.
- The innovative nature of the work proposed in the application and the potential for further development.

### **Further information**

For further information please contact:

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