![UKRI Natural Environment Research Council logo]

ASSESSMENT PANEL GUIDANCE FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF DISCOVERY SCIENCE 'PUSHING THE FRONTIERS' APPLICATIONS

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1. Introduction

The Pushing the Frontiers funding opportunity invites applications from our best environmental research teams to be truly adventurous, ambitious and enable them to pursue curiosity-driven, high-risk, high-reward projects that push the frontiers of environmental science. Up to **£24 million** is available to fund projects at a maximum cost per grant of **£950,000** FEC.

This scheme will support researchers' curiosity and imagination to enable discoveries that unlock new knowledge with a degree of adventure previously unrealised. We are seeking to invest in our best environmental researchers to be truly adventurous and ambitious in the pursuit of curiosity-driven, high risk, high reward projects. We welcome, and are increasingly supporting, multi- and interdisciplinary research, designed, supported, and delivered in partnership with other research funders and research users.

NERC have implemented a streamlined application process, as part of the UKRI-wide approach to support less bureaucratic demands of the research community.

We ask for information about the applicants' skills and the team's capability to deliver, demonstrating the ability of the team to conduct ground-breaking, innovative research and that they have the capability to successfully execute the project. This should be a narrative, not a CV, drawing on the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI) format It should showcase the range of relevant skills of the applicant and, if relevant, their team (project and project co-leads, researchers, technicians, specialists, partners and so on) have and how this will help deliver the proposed work. It can include individuals' specific achievements but only choose past contributions that best evidence their ability to deliver this work.

A detailed justification of resources is not required until an application is being considered for funding. **As such, assessors should understand that some detail typical of a longer application may not be included and look beyond this,** focusing on whether the proposed research will push the frontiers of knowledge, and consider the applicants' ideas and contributions, relative to career stage, to their field of science, the wider research and innovation community and users of research and not be solely based on metrics (publications, income, etc.).

2. Conflicts of Interest

UKRI maintains a [conflicts of interest policy](#), available at **Annex A**. We ask that you make yourself familiar with the policy and let us know as soon as possible if you have – or are unsure whether you have - any conflicts of interest with the applications to be discussed that have not already been identified in the documentation.

Please make the Panel Secretary aware of ANY conflicts of interest as soon as possible, so that the application can be reassigned to an alternative panel member.

For any application where assessors are conflicted, they will then be required to leave the (virtual) room whilst discussions are taking place.

If there is doubt as to whether the member should be asked to leave, the Chair may discuss this with the deputy chair and the NERC Executive. The NERC Executive has the final decision in any case where there is debate about whether a conflict of interest exists at all stages of the peer review process.

3. Panel Confidentiality

Research grant applications are submitted to NERC in confidence and may contain confidential information and personal data belonging to the applicant. NERC undertakes to the applicants to keep applications confidential and not to use or disclose them except as required for the peer review/funding decision process or as is required under the Data Protection Act 1998 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or any other law or regulation to which NERC is or may become subject).

Assessors may not disclose the fact that any of the enclosed grant applications have been submitted to NERC or any of the information contained in any of the applications to any person outside the Panel or otherwise involved in the peer review/funding decision process. Nor may they disclose or use the information in the grant applications for any purpose other than as part of NERC peer review/funding decision process.

The Panel's comments on and scoring of these applications will be recorded by NERC staff at the meeting(s) at which they will be discussed. NERC will not use these minutes or scores, nor disclose them to any person or body except:

- as is necessary to record the decisions of the Panel and to inform any other person or body within NERC or any other body that may be co-funding the applications as part of the funding decision process
- to the applicant as part of NERC feedback to successful and unsuccessful applicants; or
- as may be required under the Data Protection Act 1998 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or any other law or regulation to which NERC is or may become subject)

NERC will not attribute any comments that are disclosed under the Data Protection Act 1998 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to any individual assessor, but the fact that you are a member of one of the Panels is publicly available information. All personal data collected by NERC will be handled in accordance with the UK Data Protection Legislation and as set out in the UKRI Privacy Notice.

4. The Pre-Score Process

Not all applications can be discussed in detail at the Stage 1 assessment panel meeting and NERC asks assessors to submit pre-scores and comments prior to the meeting. The deadline for submission of pre-scores and comments for each opportunity is typically 1-2 weeks ahead of the Stage 1 panel meeting**.**

Pre-scores allow the Panel Chair and Co-Chair to prioritise applications for discussion. **This is increasingly important as numbers of grant applications in some panels have increased significantly, so realistic and appropriate pre-scores are needed to make the business of the panel manageable, by allowing effort to be focussed on only those excellent applications with a realistic chance of funding**. Based on the pre-scores, those applications with the potential to be judged as being of excellent quality and those applications that have received differing assessor pre-scores will be discussed in further detail at the Stage 1 assessment panel meeting. Those applications that have received consistently low pre-scores will only be briefly discussed at the Stage 1 panel meeting, to agree final scores and key points for feedback. No applications will be rejected at the pre-score stage. The discussion at the meeting is led by the assessors and final scores are agreed by the whole panel.

It is the responsibility of the assessors to:

- identify any possible conflicts of interest with applications not identified by NERC, please notify the panel secretary as soon as possible so the application can be reassigned to another panel member if needed
- consider all the application material
- submit appropriate pre-scores (1–6, 6 being the highest score) and supporting comments, based on the opportunity assessment criteria using the scoring definitions provided below, in preparation for the Stage 1 meeting discussions by the given deadline

Stage 1 – Pre-score scale and definitions:

Score	Definition
6	**Exceptional:** The application is outstanding. It addresses all the assessment criteria and meets them to an exceptional level.
5	**Excellent:** The application is very high quality. It addresses most of the assessment criteria and meets them to an excellent level. There are very minor weaknesses.
4	**Very Good:** The application demonstrates considerable quality. It meets most of the Assessment criteria to a high level. There are minor weaknesses
3	**Good:** The application is of good quality. It meets most of the assessment criteria to an acceptable level, but not across all aspects of the proposed activities. There are weaknesses.
2	**Weak:** The application is not sufficiently competitive. It meets some of the assessment criteria to an adequate level. There are, however, significant weaknesses.
1	**Poor:** The application is flawed or unsuitable quality for funding. It does not meet the assessment criteria to an adequate level.

Please note that this opportunity is being run through the UKRI Funding Service ('The Funding Service' – TFS). TFS allows scores up to 10 when submitting panel pre-scores. However, for the Stage 1 meeting we require **scores out of a maximum of 6**, in line with the Stage 1 scoring definitions provided in this document. Further guidance on how to submit pre-scores via TFS will be shared separately by email.

Your assessment should consider:

The vision:

- is of excellent quality and importance within or beyond the field(s) or area(s)
- has the potential to advance current understanding, or generate new knowledge, thinking or discovery within or beyond the field or area.
- are timely given current trends, context, and needs.
- impacts world-leading research, society, the economy, or the environment.
- what the potential direct or indirect benefits and who the beneficiaries might be

The approach:

- is effective and appropriate to achieve their 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 the applicant, and if applicable their team's, research environment (in terms of the place, its location, and relevance to the project) will contribute to the success of the work.
- demonstrate access to the appropriate services, facilities, infrastructure, or equipment to deliver the proposal

The Applicant and team capability to deliver:

To what extent has the applicant, and if relevant their team, demonstrated they 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 their approach to develop others
- contributed to developing a positive research environment and wider community

The assessment process will consider applicants' ideas and contribution relative to career stage, acknowledging that not all team members will have evidence against all criteria.
We expect all four aspects above to be addressed. Panel members should bear in mind that it is the team's capability to deliver, and that they have the necessary skills for this application, and not the excellence of individual applicants that is being assessed. Panel members should not be tempted to lower their score where the applicants do not have a long-standing track record in the research area (e.g., early career researchers, a discipline-hopping application, cutting-edge research areas) if sufficient evidence of suitable support mechanisms have been provided. Base your assessment on the application and not on your previous knowledge of, or the reputations of, the applicants or their host organisations. Please be careful to avoid any unconscious bias in your assessment on the grounds of a protected characteristic, such as age or gender.
We provide additional guidance on how panels' expectations of a strong capability to deliver could be adjusted to consider individual team members' career stage in Annex B. This list is by no means exhaustive, nor is it expected that every team member will be able to illustrate each example.

Please remember that the streamlined application process may limit detailed capability to deliver narratives and full track records for all team members cannot be expected.

Ethics and responsible research and innovation (RRI):

To what extent has the applicant demonstrated that they have identified and evaluated:

- the relevant ethical or responsible research and innovation considerations
- how they will manage these considerations

Assessors should assign a single, whole score out of 6 that addresses all four aspects of the application – Vision, Approach, Team Capability to Deliver, and RRI.
Please note that any technical assessments, detailed costings, and quotes will be assessed by NERC should the application be deemed to be fundable by the stage two assessment panel. Please note that letters of support from Project Partners were not required.

5. Role of the Stage 1 Panel

The primary role of the assessment panel is to assess the grant applications assigned to it by NERC.

Panel members are expected to attend the whole meeting and for both days (unless previously agreed with the panel secretary or where conflicts exist).

The assigned assessors will receive the full application documents. Using this information for reference, all assessment panels are responsible for:

- assessing the:
    - Vision of the project
    - Approach to the project
    - Applicant and team capability to deliver
    - Ethical and responsible research and innovation considerations of the project
- providing an agreed single, overall score out of 6 for the application
- providing a summary of the panel's discussion of the application which will be used as feedback to the applicant(s)

Ahead of the Stage 1 meeting, assessors have been asked to provide a single score and supporting comments for each application, using the1-6 scoring system outlined in Section 4 (6 being highest). These provisional scores should be used to guide the panel in their final scoring of the application. Individual assessors' scores should not be summed or averaged by the panel but treated as distinct scores. For each application, panels should agree a single final overall score out of 6.

A score cannot be changed once assigned so the panel should consider this process carefully.

6. Role of the Stage 2 Panel

The primary role of the Stage 2 assessment panel is to review the additional information provided in the PL (Project Leader) response and to provide final overall scores **out of 10** for the grant applications.

The assigned assessors can view the full application documents and the PL (Project Leader) responses on The Funding Service.

Using this information for reference, all assessors are responsible for:

- Briefly introducing the application
- Summarising for the Panel the questions and concerns that were raised in the Stage 1 meeting.
- Summarising the response that the Project Lead has provided and how it addresses the points raised by the panel or adds value to the original proposal.

Where possible, the same three assessment panel members who were assessors at the initial panel will then consider the application along with the PL's (Project Leader) response.

The discussion is led by the lead assessor and a final single score **between 1 and 10** is agreed by the panel, using the Stage 2 scoring definitions provided in Section 8.3.

All applications will receive feedback, and a score between 1 and 10 (10 being the highest).

Where the threshold for funding falls within a score band, applications of equal quality that are considered fundable by the panel will be allocated funding through a randomised process until the budget is exhausted. For example, where all applications scoring 10 can be funded, but the number of applications scoring 9 exceeds the budget, all applications scoring 9 will be entered into a randomised allocation process.

7. Role of Assessors

To assist in the assessment process, panelists are nominated as Lead Assessor, Second Assessor and Third Assessor for each application.

The assessors' role is to submit pre-scores and comments ahead of the Stage 1 panel meeting (see details in Section 4) and lead the discussion of the applications assigned to them at the Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessment

panel meetings. Lead assessors are responsible for collating and submitting feedback to NERC based on the panel's discussion, with input from the other assessors as necessary. Feedback will be provided to all applications.

8. The Panel Meeting

8.1 Before the Panel

It is the responsibility of all panel members to:

- identify any conflicts of interest with applications not identified by NERC, please notify the Panel Secretary as soon as possible so the application can be reassigned to another panel member if needed.
- consider all the application material.

We are committed to the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#). You should not use journal-based metrics, conference rankings and metrics such as the H-index or i10-index when assessing UKRI grants. The content of a paper is more important than publication metrics, or the identity of the journal, in which it was published, especially for early-career investigators.

Please consider the value and impact of all research outputs (including datasets, software, inventions, patents, preprints, other commercial activities, etc.) in addition to research publications. You should consider a broad range of impact measures including qualitative indicators of research impact, such as influence on policy and practice.

We encourage you to challenge research assessment practices that rely inappropriately on journal impact factors or conference rankings and promote and teach best practice that focuses on the value and influence of specific research outputs. If you are unsure about DORA, please speak to the panel convener or the Panel Chair.

8.2 The Stage 1 Panel Meeting

During the meeting, the Chair will invite the assigned Lead Assessor to lead the discussion by summarising their comments. The Second and Third Assessor will then be invited to make any additional comments beyond those already made by the Lead Assessor. The panel will then agree the final overall score (1-6).

Feedback will be provided for every application discussed at the stage one assessment panel meeting. It is the responsibility of the Lead Assessor to provide a summary of the panel's discussion of the application as feedback to the applicant(s) and as a record of the justification for the panel score and decisions. Feedback forms will be used to collate feedback. If the application scores a 4 or below, then the application will be rejected after the Stage 1 panel. If the application scores 5 or above, then the anonymised feedback will be sent to the PL (Project Leader) for the PL response.

Feedback provided to those progressing to Stage 2 should follow the format of numbered questions so that the PL can provide a clear response to the panel's comments. It should give context to the key factors that led to the application getting the score it did. Comments should not be made that could reveal assessor's identities. Lead Assessors should ensure that the feedback provided is of sufficient length so that it provides an appropriate level of detail to enable the applicant to be clear in their response.

Where the application is progressing to Stage 2, the Lead Assessor should record the key points using a peer review form which will be sent to them via The Funding Service. Second and third assessors should be prepared to provide the lead assessor with input. Feedback forms will be used to collate feedback. The panel secretary will confirm that the feedback is useable and can be added to a reviewer form in TFS.

Where an application is not progressing to Stage 2, care should be taken to present the feedback constructively. It should not be a list of strengths and weaknesses as in a review. It should give context to the key factors that led to the application getting the score it did and should explain how the applicants could have achieved higher scores. Comments should not be made that could reveal assessor's identities. Lead Assessors should ensure

that the feedback provided is of a sufficient length so that it provides an appropriate level of detail to enable the applicant to be clear as to why their application received the score it did and so that they can see how it could be improved.

8.3 The Stage 2 Panel Meeting

During the meeting, the Chair will invite the assigned Lead Assessor to lead the discussion by summarising their comments and referring to their previous comments from the initial panel and the PL (Project Leader) response. The Second and Third Assessor will then be invited to make any additional comments beyond those already made by the Lead Assessor. The final score **out of 10** based on the vision, approach, team capability to deliver, and RRI will then need to be agreed, with careful reference to the definitions provided below.

Final scores cannot be changed once assigned so the panel should consider this process carefully.

Score	Definition
10	**Exceptional:** The application meets all the assessment criteria to the highest standard. It's hard to see how the application could be improved.
9	**Outstanding:** The application very strongly meets all the assessment criteria.
8	**Excellent:** The application strongly meets all the assessment criteria.
7	**Very Good:** The application meets the assessment criteria well but with some minor weaknesses or limitations.
6	**Good:** The application meets the assessment criteria well but with some clear weaknesses or limitations.
5	**Adequate:** The application meets the assessment criteria but with clear weaknesses or limitations.
4	**Weak:** The application meets the assessment criteria but with significant weaknesses or limitations.
3	**Poor:** The application meets the assessment criteria but has major weaknesses or limitations.
2	**Unsatisfactory:** The application does not meet one or more of the assessment criteria.
1	**Very Unsatisfactory:** The application does not meet any of the assessment criteria.

The Lead Assessor should record the key points using the using the feedback form provided. Second and Third Assessors should be prepared to provide the Lead Assessor with input.

Care should be taken to present the feedback constructively; it should not be a list of strengths and weaknesses as in a review. It should give context to the key factors that led to the application getting the score it did and should explain how the applicants could have achieved higher scores. Lead Assessors should ensure that the feedback provided is of a sufficient length so that it provides an appropriate level of detail to enable the applicant to be clear as to why their application received the score it did and so that they can see how it could be improved.

9. Panel outcomes

Funding decisions will be made by the NERC office based on the panel's scores and recommendations. Funding will be allocated by score band within individual panels. Where the threshold for funding falls within a score band, applications of equal quality that are considered fundable by the panel will be allocated funding through a randomised process until the budget is exhausted. For example, where all applications scoring 10 can be funded, but the number of applications scoring 9 exceeds the budget, all applications scoring 9 will be entered into a randomised allocation process.

Applicants will receive the panel's feedback and their final score out of 10. Scores will also be published on the NERC Outcomes webpage, anonymised for those who are not awarded funding.

10. Exceptional Permission to Exceed the Standard Grant Limit

Most applications will be expected to be under £950,000. We recognise that a small number of projects have exceptional costs that require the budget to exceed the £950,000 limit. A third option (over £950,000) is available to recognise this limited number of cases. No further information on costs will be submitted at the time of application.

Once a decision is made on applications that are in the funding frame, we will request further details about the funding required under each fund heading and justification for those costs. This will enable us to remove costs associated with NERC services and facilities and award those costs notionally. Where the costs requested exceed the £950,000 limit, further justification will be required, and we reserve the right to reduce the amount requested.

11. Funding for International Collaborations

We work internationally with other funding organisations to help support excellent research collaborations. Agreements exist with priority funders to allow researchers to submit a single collaborative application. These agreements help minimise the risk of double jeopardy - instead of being reviewed by both funders, each collaborative submission is reviewed by a single panel, avoiding duplication of effort for applicants and peer reviewers. These agreements do not represent additional funding, their aim is to make routes to collaboration as 'normal business' as possible.

Agreements operate with the NSF division of environmental biology (DEB), the NSF directorate for geosciences (GEO), the Research Council for the State of São Paulo, Brazil (FAPESP) and Fonds National de la Recherche (FNR) in Luxembourg. There are more details on the arrangements for [international collaborations](#) on the NERC website.

Any applications submitted under these mechanisms should be assessed in the same way as other applications submitted to this round. The panel should satisfy itself that the collaboration is well thought out, that it is an integrated part of the project and that it will add value.

Handling Conflicts of Interest in Peer Review - Guidance for NERC Reviewers and Panel Members

A conflict of interest occurs when an individual involved in the assessment of an application for funding has a personal, professional, or organisational relationship with the applicants, affecting their ability to undertake their role in an objective and unbiased way. If you are asked to take part in NERC peer review, either to review a NERC application or be a member of a NERC moderating or assessment panel then you need to be aware of the UKRI conflicts policy.

UKRI defines a conflict of interest as a situation in which an individual's ability to exercise judgement or act in one role is, could be, or is seen to be impaired or otherwise influenced by their involvement in another role or relationship.

You will have connections and collaborations both formal and informal with a range of organisations and individuals. To help you interpret the broad definitions above, this advice aims to set clear expectations of the specific situations considered to represent a material conflict of interest, and when conflicts of interest need to be declared to NERC so that appropriate action can be taken. Definitions of the individuals that may be involved in an application (investigators, project partners etc.) can be found in the NERC Grants Handbook.

NERC will try to avoid asking you to assess applications where you have conflicts that can be identified from our own records, but many will not be obvious to us. The final responsibility for identifying and reporting conflicts of interest must therefore rest with the individual. Timing is very important as late notification is much more difficult to manage. A conflict for a panel member identified when the panel is being set up is straightforward to manage, the same conflict identified on the day of the meeting can create major problems, so please check the applications assigned to you carefully as soon as you receive them.

What Constitutes a Conflict of Interest?

Due to the complexities of relationships between researchers it is challenging to provide definitive and exclusive definitions. Some cases will be clear cut, others will be less so and will require a judgement call. We expect researchers who work in the same field to know each other, and this doesn't bar you from commenting on their applications. The test should be 'will a neutral observer have confidence in the impartiality of any advice provided' and in any case where there is significant doubt the relationship should be treated as a conflict. The NERC Executive has the final decision in any case where there is debate about whether a conflict of interest exists.

The following are examples of conflicts of interest considered material by NERC for an application that you have been asked to assess:

	Conflict	Action Required
1	You are a named investigator; staff member or project partner involved in the application or have signed a letter of support	NERC should identify these conflicts, please tell us if an error has been made.
2	You have a formal affiliation to any Research Organisation or Project Partner organisation involved in the application. This generally means you are a current member of staff at the organisation. You also have a formal affiliation if you are a Professor Emeritus, or Visiting Professor, or have signed a	NERC should identify staff conflicts, please tell us if an error has been made. Please inform us of other relationships e.g., visiting professor which may not be obvious to us.

	contract of employment or receive personal remuneration more than £5,000 per annum from the organisation. For Fellowship applications conflicts apply to both the organisation where the applicant is currently based and the organisation where the fellowship would be held. [Association with an organisation that has provided a letter of support but is not a Project Partner is not a conflict]	**If you are moving to a new organisation, please inform us as this will create new conflicts.**
3	You are directly involved in the work proposed and would benefit from it being funded and/or have assisted the applicants with their application for funding and/or have agreed to be a member of an advisory committee connected with the project.	Please inform us NERC may not have received complete information.
4	You have an existing business or professional partnership with any of the investigators or staff named in the application	Please inform us NERC does not hold this information.
5	You are a close relative - spouse, child, sibling, or parent - of any of the investigators or staff named in the application.	Please inform us NERC does not hold this information.
6	You are a close friend of any of the investigators or staff named in the application and think that might affect your judgement or be seen as doing so by a neutral observer familiar with the relationship.	Please inform us NERC does not hold this information.
7	You are in close regular collaboration with any individuals named in the application, including investigators, research staff, collaborators, subcontractors, and project partners, to an extent where you feel uncomfortable being involved in the discussion or you feel unable to give an unbiased opinion.	Please inform us NERC does not hold this information.
8	On Fellowship applications: you have been the applicant's supervisor within the last eight years.	Please inform us NERC does not hold this information.
9	You have had any involvement in the development of the application, at any stage of its preparation, including providing comments or advice to the applicants.	Please inform us NERC does not hold this information.

Managing conflicts

Panels

Panel members are reminded to identify any material conflicts of interest, especially with applications they have been asked to introduce, to the Panel Secretary, as early as possible in advance of the meeting. Where a conflict of interest is identified, panel members' meeting papers will be edited to remove relevant information regarding the conflicted application and the member will be asked to leave the meeting room when it is discussed. The meeting record will note all instances where a conflict of interest was identified and managed at a panel. For some panels, particularly where these are interview panels, the standard practice of members leaving the meeting for a conflicted application may not be practical. However, they will never participate in the discussion of that application or be permitted to influence the final ranking of an application

where such a conflict exists. In the peer review of calls with a specific research scope NERC will avoid appointing anyone to a panel that is a named investigator on any application to be considered by that panel. For Discovery Science panels, where the research scope can be broad, NERC will only involve applicants in panels when their expertise is critical, the meeting procedures will prevent them being able to influence or receive immediate information on the score or ranking of their application.

NERC staff

NERC staff may also have connections with applicants that constitute a conflict of interest. Although their opportunity to influence outcomes is limited, in such circumstances staff will not be involved in any decision stage for applications where a material conflict exists.

NEXT PAGE: ANNEX B Career Considerations in Capability to Deliver

Annex B Career Considerations in Capability to Deliver

Early career	**Established career** (in addition to those indicated for early career)
• has an ability to generate new ideas, technologies, or methodologies, with examples of previous breakthroughs, the initiation of ground-breaking discovery, or advancements in a relevant field of environmental science research • has an ability to deliver and communicate excellent research, with examples of relevant outputs that are considered of international quality, such as open data sets, publications, conference presentations, policies, patents etc. • has a high level of expertise, with examples of the previous application of relevant key skills or training received, or evidence that they are or have the capability to become, a recognised leader in the field • has capability to successfully execute the project, with examples, relevant to the needs of the proposed research, of effective project management, team leadership and collaborative relationships • understands the importance of the development of team members and demonstrates the capacity and experience for supervision, training, teaching, or mentoring, including students and post-doctoral researchers • shows evidence of engagement with the wider research community, including contributions to improving research culture and integrity, with examples of peer review commitments, committee memberships, and positions of community responsibility • shows evidence of engagement with broader society and knowledge exchange across sectors, with examples of public outreach, or contributions to policy development, new practices, or business innovation	• has made a significant contribution to the generation of new ideas, technologies, or methodologies, with examples of previous breakthroughs, ground-breaking discovery or advancements that have transformed a field of environmental science research. • has delivered and communicated excellent research, with examples of a significant volume of contributions that are of international quality that has widely influenced the research agenda. • has a very high level of expertise, with examples of contributing to the advancement of techniques or training given, or evidence that they are recognised as a world-leader in the field. • has capability to successfully execute the project, with examples of effective project management, visionary leadership in shaping the direction of a team or organisation, or significant collaborative networks. • has made significant contributions to the support and development of other researchers, recognised as a role model for the community. • shows evidence of significant engagement with the wider research community, with examples of advocacy roles for research culture and integrity, utilising influence to shape broader policy across the research and innovation landscape. • shows evidence of significant engagement with broader society and knowledge exchange, with examples of public advocacy roles, championship, engagement with high-level policy makers, or business community