

Appointment of new members to the Natural England Science Advisory Committee (NESAC)

Natural England is seeking to appoint new members from across the scientific community to join its Science Advisory Committee (NESAC), providing vital advice on and scrutiny of our science and evidence work.

Natural England is a Non-Departmental Public Body, formally established on 1 October 2006 under section 1 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 as the Government's statutory advisor on the natural environment in England. Our purpose, as set out in the Act, is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Our vision is of thriving nature for people and planet as we recognise that a healthy natural environment is fundamental to everyone's health, wealth and happiness. Our mission is to build partnerships for nature's recovery, which reflects the need for us to work with and through a wide range of people and the need for rapid action to rebuild resilient ecosystems.

The work we do to achieve this reflects the priorities and targets set out in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan and is focused around 6 strategic portfolios:

- Resilient landscapes and seas
- Sustainable development
- Greener farming and fisheries
- Connecting people with nature
- Science and Evidence
- Managing the Organisation

Collectively these portfolios deliver a plethora of actions towards nature recovery, led by evidence. Our definition of nature encompasses natural beauty, wildlife, the geology that underpins natural character and habitats and our cultural connections with nature.

Natural England's Science Advisory Committee

Natural England's Science Advisory Committee is a sub-Committee of Natural England's Board providing:

- advice to the Board on the integrity and relevance of Natural England's science and evidence programme: of our prospective research and monitoring programmes; and of our plans for particular pieces of work.
- challenge on the rationale and methods for proposed studies; and to the emerging findings of specific pieces of research;

- post-hoc analysis, and comment, on the success of methodologies and approaches we have applied;
- assurance that internal peer review and external QA processes adopted are robust;
- Support to identify suitably qualified reviewers that might be approached to undertake external quality assurance or peer review;
- a function as a champion for Natural England's science, evidence and evaluation work; helping to forge links and partnerships with the wider scientific community.

Committee members include specialists from Natural England Board and a number of independent members offering scientific expertise appropriate to Natural England's purpose.

NESAC membership

Natural England would like to appoint to NESAC up to 4 individuals with a proven track record in an area relevant to the work of Natural England. Applications will be welcomed from experts with a strong track record of research and/or the application of research across a broad range of disciplines.

As a member of the committee you would normally be expected to serve for at least 3 years, attending 4 meetings per annum. In addition, members will have the opportunity to attend and contribute to relevant Natural England events, such as NESAC Science Seminars, Natural England Science to Delivery conferences and workshops. For full details please see the [NESAC Terms of Reference](#).

Selection criteria

The appointees will be able to work with peers in the academic community, scrutinising and advising on Natural England's evidence base and the scientific principles that guide its work.

The successful candidates will complement the specialist knowledge of current members. The particular areas where the committee aims to maintain and/or expand expertise include:

- soil science
- marine sciences
- urban ecology, green infrastructure
- economics
- geology and geomorphology
- public dialogue, engagement and participation,
- behavioural sciences
- social research methods and analysis
- recreation and access

- cultural, heritage and historic environment
- public health and wellbeing
- new and emerging technologies including artificial intelligence and genetics

The application form requires you to demonstrate how your skills and expertise in one or more of these areas match a series of criteria listed below.

Essential criteria – candidates must demonstrate the following requirements through the application form and (if necessary) at interview. These are:

1. A proven track-record in an area relevant to the work of Natural England who can develop and challenge Natural England's reputation as a highly respected scientific adviser to government, civil society and local communities.
2. Demonstrate a proven ability to work closely with Natural England or equivalent delivery bodies and peers in the academic community, scrutinising and advising on the development and application of science and evidence, and the scientific principles that guide this work.
3. The ability to communicate and build relationships at a senior level, with good interpersonal skills, including the ability to negotiate, persuade and build partnerships.
4. The ability to provide impartial, objective and pragmatic advice, to contribute to discussions at a strategic level, provide challenge and think creatively.
5. A commitment to the conservation, enhancement and management of the natural environment and the principles of sustainable development.
6. An understanding of the changing delivery landscape within which Natural England operates.

Remuneration

These posts are not salaried but Natural England will reimburse appropriate travel costs.

To apply

Please read the above guidance and complete the application form and return it to fiona.blackburn@naturalengland.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 12 noon, Friday 23 August 2024

Any questions

If you would like any further information about Natural England or the work of the Committee, please contact Ginny Swaile (ginny.swaile@naturalengland.org.uk) or Cheryl Willis (cheryl.willis@naturalengland.org.uk)