NEOF Access for Visitor Facility Training
Instructions and **Preview of requested information**

This is only a synopsis of the questions requested; to submit the access request, please go back to the Access portal.

Before submitting this form:

- This set of instructions is solely for applying for access or training at the NEOF Visitor Facility (e.g. for a studentship funded by NERC, UKRI or other);
  - if your project is funded by a NERC grant, please refer to the instructions found here;
  - if you are applying to the NEOF Pilot Omics competition, please refer to the instructions found here;
- **The NEOF-VF now operates a structured application cycle with three application rounds throughout the year. The NEOF Visitor Facility will be open to new enquiries from 1st to 30th JULY 2026, with consultation provided during August and a ssubmission deadline of 28th AUGUST 2026. For more info see here.**
- Please ensure you have completed the **enquiry** process (contact us here); this allows you to discuss your project's technical requirements with the NEOF team, to ensure the feasibility of your project and to obtain a quote.
- Please ensure all members of your research team have understood and agreed to NEOF's **Terms and Conditions**. By submitting the form, you agree to adhere to NEOF's Terms and Conditions.

NEOF are **blind reviewing all pilot projects** to increase the fairness and equity of proposal assessment. This means that information from personal fields (investigator name, institution, etc) is redacted before it reaches the Steering Committee members, who review projects. The project description will be passed directly to the Steering Committee, so please write in a way that is not personally identifiable (including file names). The Steering Committee will have no access to your interactions with the enquiries team, other than a quote, where your name and institution will be redacted.

The following documents are required for your submission - please upload:

- ☐ NEOF quote
- ☐ **Project Description**
- ☐ NEOF-VF Appendix

Your **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** should adequately explain the following aspects:

- ☐ Background
- ☐ Objectives of the research and the relevance of the proposed molecular genetic analyses to these objectives
- ☐ your contribution to the work, including, for example, any bioinformatic analyses
- ☐ any wider justification for the project
- ☐ Maximum **1000 words** excluding references. Submit as a PDF. Figure legends and tables do not contribute to word count.
- ☐ Please note that the Visitor Facility form is not shared with reviewers so the relevant details should be incorporated into the project description submitted to the panel.

Examples of successful past applications have been redacted, and with the kind permission of their lead investigators, are available below:

- NEOF1768_MetagenomicsRodentViruses_Redacted_Approved.pdf
- NEOF1818_Metabarcoding_FungiBiodiversity_Redacted_Approved.pdf
- NEOF1775_LowCoverageWholeGenomeSequencing_Redacted_Approved.pdf
- NEOF1759_MetabarcodingDiet_MolecularSexing_Redacted_PI_Approved.pdf

Only applications from NERC eligible PIs with all documents submitted will be considered.

Please email any technical issue to neof@sheffield.ac.uk

Preview of requested information

Fields with * are mandatory.
This is only a synopsis of the questions requested; to submit the access request, please go back to the Access portal.

Step 1 of 7: **Instructions** link to this document

Step 2: Which **service**(s) are you requesting access for? Select as many as are applicable

- ☐ I wish to provide samples for sequencing
- ☐ I wish to provide samples for proteomics
- ☐ I wish to provide samples for metabolomics
- ☐ I wish to request training for my postgraduate student/ technician/ postdoc/ myself at the NEOF Visitor Facility (based in Sheffield)
- ☐ I wish to request nucleic acid extraction at the NEOF Visitor Facility
- ☐ I wish to request bespoke support with bioinformatic analysis

Step 3: How is your project **funded**? Options:

- ☐ NERC grant
- ☐ Other UKRI grant
- ☐ NERC PhD studentship
- ☐ Other UKRI PhD studentship
- ☐ Non-NERC/ UKRI grant
- ☐ Non-NERC/ UKRI studentship
- ☐ Application to Pilot competition (seasonal)

- ☐ Reference Number (if NERC or UKRI funded)
- ☐ Funding start date
- ☐ Funding end date
- ☐ Please confirm whether the remaining funded time will be sufficient to fully complete the proposed study.

Please note that we do not normally accept an application within 6 months of the end of the grant or studentship. Ideally, applications should not be made in the final year of the grant/studentship.

- ☐ Please provide details of how your project is funded (if not funded by NERC or UKRI)

Step 4: **Your Research Team**

Please note that the PI must comply with the UKRI eligibility criteria; applicants should be eligible as per NERC guidelines:
https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/guidance-for-applicants/check-if-you-are-eligible-for-funding/

- ☐ Principal investigator title
- ☐ Principal Investigator name (First & Last)

- ☐ Job title; Institute; Email; Phone
- ☐ Full names and institutes of any co-investigators
- ☐ Name and year of study of the PhD student(s) associated with your proposal

- ☐ Names and institutions for any of your project partners, e.g. CASE partners etc.
- ☐ If you are requesting access to the NEOF Visitor Facility, who is it for?
- ☐ Bioinformatics requirements: When the data are generated, do you have the opportunities & experience to analyse them or would you require help to analyse your data? (maximum 50 words). Please do not reveal any information that would identify your research team.

Step 5: **Your project**

Applicants should check whether their proposal is within NERC remit, before consulting with the NEOF team:
https://www.ukri.org/councils/nerc/remit-programmes-and-priorities/
For proposals that span council remits, most of the work should be clearly within NERC remit. The committee reserves the right not to consider submissions that are judged to be out of remit.

- ☐ Has this or a similar proposal previously been submitted to NEOF? If so, give the reference number and outline how this proposal differs and has incorporated feedback from the committee. *The committee reserves the right not to consider resubmissions that are substantively unchanged.*
- ☐ Project title
- ☐ Project **abstract** (100 words maximum)

Samples
Collection of geographical data on sampling locations:
We need to know the geographical origins of your samples, ideally a latitude and longitude. If this is not known, please provide the sea or country in which the samples are collected, then further location detail such as the field site, the research station, the island, lake, river or the nearest city in which samples have been collected. For samples maintained in labs or from aquaria, museums, zoos, etc, please state where originally collected or their geographical range in the wild.

DO NOT submit GPS coordinates; please convert them into Decimal Degrees format (https://www.gps-coordinates.net/gps-coordinates-converter).

Finally, you must have appropriate legal and ethical permissions for the collection and analysis of your samples.

- ☐ Longitude
  Please provide the longitude according to this format: for instance, longitude of nearest city Liverpool is -2.983333.
- ☐ Latitude
  Please provide the latitude according to this format: for instance, latitude of nearest city Liverpool is 53.400002

OR

- ☐ Country
- ☐ Sea
- ☐ Field Site / Research Station/ island/ lake/ river/ nearest city

- ☐ Terrestrial/ Freshwater/ Marine/ Polar

- ☐ Please provide a brief description of availability of sample*
  e.g. 1. amount of material available; 2. are samples available as fresh or freshly frozen? 3. if samples are in long-term storage, how have they been stored? 4. if samples are being collected from the field, comment on the logistics of shipping samples. 5. Samples may either be prepared in applicants' own laboratory or at NEOF, which houses expertise and equipment for high molecular weight nucleic acid extraction and QC. If this is required, please flag this during project discussions.
- ☐ When do you anticipate your samples to be available?
- ☐ You must have appropriate legal and ethical permissions for the collection and analysis of your samples

- ☐ Quote reference number* - Please enter the Quote reference number provided to you at the enquiry stage by a NEOF staff member. (example CGR SDxxx) If you do not have one please contact us via the Enquiry form before completing this access form. If you have been given 2 quotes, please upload both.

Step 6 - Upload **supporting documentation** as per above instructions

Step 7 - Application summary, captcha and **SUBMIT**.