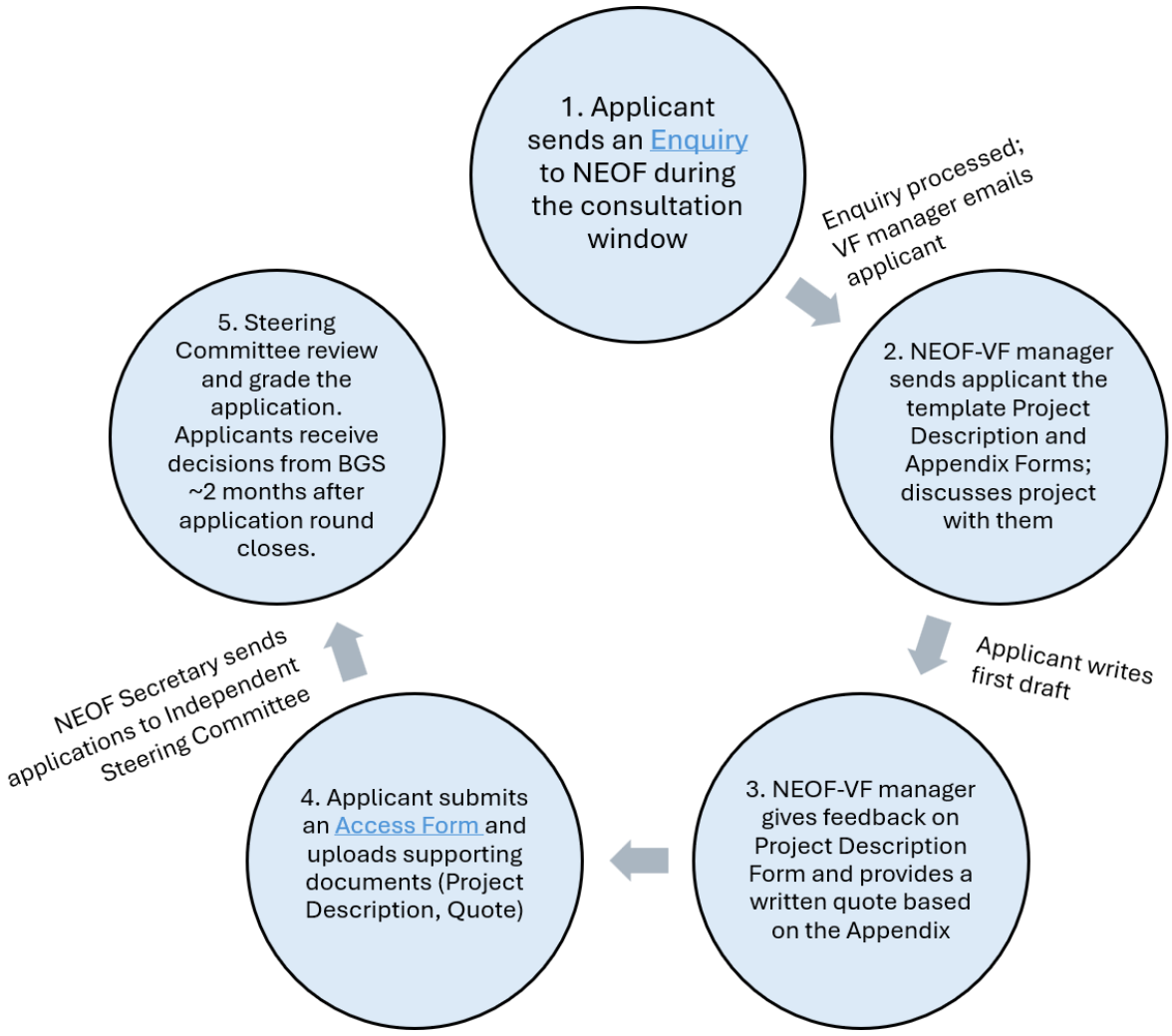
NEOF Access for Visitor Facility Training
Instructions and **Preview of requested information**

This document provides all of the information you will need to submit an application to the Visitor Facility. It includes a synopsis of the questions requested; to submit the access request, please go back to the Access portal. This is not the form that you upload/submit.



Schematic, outlining the application process.

Before submitting your application:

- 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.

- 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;

- **The NEOF-VF operates a structured application cycle with three application rounds throughout the year. For dates and more information see here.**

- 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 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**

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

a. Background (~200 words)
b. Objectives of the research (~300 words)
c. Methodology (~300 words); Explain how the proposed molecular genetics will achieve the objectives; this should include experimental details such as sample numbers, repeats, controls, treatments, marker/sequencing details, amplicon size, read depth, coverage, analyses, etc.
d. Visitor / PI contribution to the work, including, for example, any bioinformatic analyses (~100 words)
e. Any wider justification for the project (~100 words)
f. References

- The proposal should describe work that could result in a PhD thesis chapter or publication.

- Maximum **1000 words;** references, figure legends and tables do not contribute to word count. Submit as a PDF.
- Please note that the Visitor Facility appendix 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 - Select option 2

1. I have a NERC/UKRI grant and wish to access NEOF
2. I wish to access the Visitor Facility (access to lab including wet lab training and support with data analyses)

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 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

- 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*;
- 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; please provide the sea or country in which the samples are collected. If more than one origin, please select one from the drop down list and give further details in the description of availability field.

For samples maintained in labs or from aquaria, museums, zoos, etc, please state where originally collected or their geographical range in the wild.

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

- Country
- Sea
- Please provide a brief description of availability of sample*

For instance:

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 and any ethical requirements 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

    - I confirm that I have appropriate legal and ethical permissions for the collection and analysis of my samples
    - I will be / I am in the process of applying for legal and ethical permissions for the collection and analysis of my samples
    - N/A

- 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**

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