

Job Title: NCEO Finance and Contracts Officer

Grade: 6

Salary: £33,002 to £37,694 per annum, pro-rata if part-time

Department: National Centre for Earth Observation

Hours/Contract: Full-time or job share, fixed term contract to 31 March 2027

Job Family: Management and Administration

Reference: 12477

Role Purpose

The post-holder is responsible for financial accounting of NCEOs internal and external income, tracking of expenditure within NCEO, issuing budgets, managing expenditure statements and invoices, and providing both financial and contractual information in line with NCEOs governance requirements.

Resources managed

NERC main agreement (which comprises National Capability awards) and external funding awards totalling £15 – 17 m per annum. This is delivered by staff 136 (Headcount) 103.3 (FTE)

Collaborative partnerships at 15 centres (mixture of HEIs and Research centres)

In addition to the main NERC agreement and collaborative agreements there are a further 20-30 MOUs, subcontracts and studentship agreements.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

Finance Management

- Create and update budgets in line with NERC awards to NCEO, external contracts and staffing assignments; reporting changes, conflicts and gaps to the Centre Manager, NCEO Director and relevant line managers across NCEO partners.
- Liaise with the Research and Enterprise Division for the set-up of new NCEO related grants at Leicester; monitoring spends with NCEO partners, annual reconciliation of accounts, setup of new NCEO-related grants and working on assurance of finance in line with good practice.
- Work closely with the finance and contract functions of NCEO partners across the UK to ensure good practice; working with the Centre Manager and NCEO Director to ensure alignment between finance and scientific work programmes.
- Perform detailed analysis of NCEO budgets and financial forecasts for the Centre Manager and NCEO Director to support decision-making; making recommendations to reconcile financial spends with knowledge of funder terms and conditions.
- Arrange approvals and issue annual and quarterly financial schedules, invoicing and notifications for NCEO partners; pro-actively accounting for expenditure and invoice payments to ensure NCEO activities can be conducted with efficiency.
- Produce costings for new grants and contracts, providing inputs into calculations for complex proposals including NCEO's programmatic proposals to NERC and Leicester-led NCEO external contracts.
- Prepare and implement staff documentation for NCEO colleagues, both at Leicester and across NCEO partners, including staff extensions and request for budget variations.





NCEO Partnership Agreements and Contracts

- Work with contracts officers across NCEO partners to develop and implement collaborative partnerships research agreements and amendments
- Maintain a record of the signed partnerships agreements between the University of Leicester and the NCEO partners.
- Draft sub-contracts, with colleagues in RED, for non-NERC grants and contracts involving NCEO partners.
- Use experience and knowledge acquired to contribute to the continuous improvement of the partnership contract agreements and processes.

Reporting and Governance

- Be responsible for the preparation of reports on the overall NCEO Budget and its components for the NCEO Director and the NCEO Board.
- Align the NCEO financial model to the University systems to ensure transparent and seamless reporting. Use in-depth knowledge of SAP to merge financial returns from partners with reporting required for Leicester.
- Prepare financial statements for NCEO governance meetings (quarterly executive meetings, tri annual NCEO Board and annual NERC assurance meetings) for the Centre Manager to present.
- Track and collate the non-NERC external income by identifying external awards through NCEOs annual reporting lines, reviewing resource information received from partners and investigating outliers.
- Prepare end of year accounts for verification / audit by University of Leicester to ensure good financial governance.

Procurement and Assets

- Be responsible for good procurement practice, advising the NCEO Director and others in NCEO initiating procurements.
- Monitor budgets and advise on NCEO capital spends, taking responsibility for good records and accounting of capital budgets allowing approvals from the NCEO Director.
- Support procurements in Leicester, including procurement waivers and invoicing status.
- Maintain a register of NCEO assets and their locations

Internal and External Relationships

- Report to the Centre and Programme Manager, supporting the Executive Team and NCEO Director.
- Work closely with the NCEO Director, providing responses to urgent queries, requests for financial overviews of the total budget and programmes, and advice on financial implications of work programme requests.
- Work with University of Leicester staff in the Research Support Office (finance and contracts), Finance Hub (accounts payable and smart pay), Procurement Office and VAT office to support.
- Act as the first point of contact for NERC Financial Managers and Finance Managers across NCEO partner institutions, resolving and filtering enquiries to ensure effective day to day operational efficiency.
- Direct and advise NCEO science staff at Leicester and external institutions regarding financial operations, reporting and contract templates.





- Represent NCEO at Centre-level working groups where appropriate.

Planning and Organising

- Financial planning for submission of NCEO programmatic proposals and for implementation of new awards.
- Work to NERC end of year (March) and University end of year (July), aligning activities and reporting accordingly.
- Plan weeks and months ahead to set an meet deadlines in-line with governance reporting, financial schedules, NCEO Board and Executive meetings and NERC assurance meetings.
- Prioritise delivery to ensure operational efficiency, responding to new pressures, including those arising from non-standard work.

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- Evidence of relevant education, ideally with good A Levels or degree and a minimum of grade C in GCSE Maths*
- Foundation level financial qualification (eg AAT) or actively studying towards full qualification, or willingness to undertake; or equivalent
- Previous experience in a similar finance / accounting role implementing financial procedures in a busy environment
- Experience of calculating and managing finances, with significant relevant work experience*
- Experience of proactively working with Directors / managers to alert them to the financial implications of actions*
- Experience of administering contracts in a University or commercial context*
- Experience of computerised accounting systems and financial calculations using Excel spreadsheets*
- Working knowledge of finance hub / accounts payable and Research Support Office processes relevant to this post.

Desirable

- Experience working within a HE environment.
- Previous experience of managing multiple budget lines.
- Experience of working flexibly as tasks change.
- Experience of updating financial models.
- Experience of representing financial information graphically.

Skills, Abilities and Competencies

Essential

- Ability to synthesise complex financial issues for non-financial staff
- Ability to demonstrate behaviours that are in accordance with the University values of inclusive, inspiring and impactful.
- Ability to work within a team
- Effective oral and written skills in order to communicate effectively with staff.





- A high level of skill with all of the Microsoft office suite, specifically Excel and Word.
- A high level of knowledge regarding financial systems and regulations including VAT
- Ability to provide advice and guidance to collaborators / customers regarding budgets and processes.
- Ability to produce comprehensive financial reports multiple systems including SAP.
- Ability to work in a dynamic way, responding positively to new events and challenges as they arise.
- Excellent interpersonal skills in working with a wide range of staff and external clients and customers.
- Excellent attention to detail
- Strong organisational skills with the ability to plan and manage own work activities and tasks

****Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview***

Reason for Fixed Term Contract

The reason for the fixed term contract is stated in section 1.9 in the summary of contractual terms in your contract of employment.

Criminal Declaration

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal offence, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.

Supporting University Activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are encouraged to support key university activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We encourage all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required. If supporting these activities is likely to affect your workload, please speak to your line manager in the first instance

University Values

Inclusive - We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

Inspiring - We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

Impactful - As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community

Freedom of Speech

The University is committed to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom within the law throughout our recruitment processes. We ensure that all candidates are considered based on merit and suitability for the role, without regard to their lawful viewpoints or the expression of challenging or controversial ideas. Our recruitment policies and practices are designed to protect applicants from





discrimination or adverse treatment on the basis of their opinions, and to foster an environment where open debate and diverse perspectives are valued as essential to our academic mission.

Equity and Diversity

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equality support our efforts to attract a diverse range of high quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equality, diversity and inclusion.

