

RAPID CLIMATE CHANGE

Second Announcement of Opportunity for Research Proposals:

Call for Outline Bids

The Natural Environment Research Council has an established programme on Rapid Climate Change (RAPID). The purpose of RAPID is to improve our ability to quantify the probability and magnitude of future rapid change in climate. The programme aims to investigate and understand the causes of rapid climate change, with a main (but not exclusive) focus on the role of the Atlantic Ocean's thermohaline circulation (THC). This Announcement of Opportunity (AO) targets specific areas of the programme, taking account of projects already funded/planned.

Outline bids from eligible UK researchers are invited that address any of the objectives in the RAPID science plan (see <http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk/rapid/Scienceplan.php>), except for objective 1. However, bids that address the following areas are particularly welcomed by the Steering Committee:

- acquisition or synthesis of data (palaeo and/or present-day observations) to complement or enhance those already being gathered under RAPID, including:
 - improved marine palaeo data about past changes in the THC, and studies linking past changes in the ocean to those on land
 - synthesised palaeo datasets of past rapid changes, that could also be used for the evaluation of rapid-climate-change simulations by models
- model studies or model-data syntheses (of palaeo or present day observations), including:
 - use of observations being acquired by RAPID and related programmes
 - investigation of specific past rapid climate changes
 - atmospheric response to changes in the THC (particularly storm tracks, frequency and strength, and energy and moisture transports)
- quantifying the probability and magnitude of potential future rapid climate change, and uncertainties in these estimates, including:
 - scenarios for use in risk and impact assessments by social and policy analysts.

It is expected that bids to this AO will take account of existing RAPID activities and seek to build on or complement the science already taking place within the programme (see <http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk/rapid/r1awards.php> & <http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk/rapid/Modexp.php>)

The Steering Committee welcomes bids that involve researchers from a variety of disciplines, with the aim of developing links between the observational, palaeo and modelling elements of the programme. The funding made available for this AO by the Steering Committee is ~£3million.

Proposals for awards of up to 3 years' duration will be considered. An applicant is limited to one application as a Principal Investigator, and one additional application as a Co-Investigator to this AO. However, applicants are not limited in the number of applications on which they appear as a Project Partner. Successful Outline Bids will be invited for submission as a full research proposal. For queries relating to scientific aspects of the AO contact the Science Co-ordinator (Dr. Meric Srokosz, tel: 023-8059-6414, e-mail: mas@soc.soton.ac.uk), and for other aspects of the programme, contact the Programme Co-ordinator (Dr. Andy Parsons, tel: 01793 411679, e-mail: andy.parsons@nerc.ac.uk).

The closing date for submission of outline bid proposals is 15th December 2003. An outline bid form can be downloaded from <http://www.soc.soton.ac.uk/rapid/AO2OBform.doc>. Three double-sided hard copies and one electronic copy of the completed form must be sent to the Programme Co-ordinator (Dr. Andy Parsons, NERC, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, SN2 1EU. E-mail andy.parsons@nerc.ac.uk).

The RAPID programme is providing an additional opportunity for undertaking rapid climate change research through a joint programme of up to 4 million with the Netherlands and Norwegian Research Councils. Further details about the joint UK/NL/Norway Announcement of Opportunity can be found alongside the present announcement or on the RAPID web site (<http://rapid.nerc.ac.uk>).