



UK Research
and Innovation



Enhancing resilience to wildfires in the wildland-urban interface

Webinar for potential applicants
Thursday, 9th July 2026

Welcome



Natural Sciences and Engineering
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences
naturelles et en génie du Canada

Canada

SSHRC  CRSH

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada



CIHR IRSC

Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada



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Science and
Technology
Facilities Council



Arts and
Humanities
Research Council



Engineering and
Physical Sciences
Research Council



Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council



Economic
and Social
Research Council



Research
England



Natural
Environment
Research Council



Innovate
UK



Medical
Research
Council



Agenda

1. Welcome & panel introduction

2. Programme wide overview

Background & rationale, scope overview, key points

3. How the U.S. community can engage with this opportunity

U.S. National Science Foundation

4. How the Canada community can engage with this opportunity

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council,
Canadian Institutes of Health Research

5. How the UK community can engage with this opportunity

UK Research & Innovation

6. How to apply, assessment process & timeline

7. Q&A

Answering pre-submitted questions and live Q&A

8. Next steps





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Programme wide overview

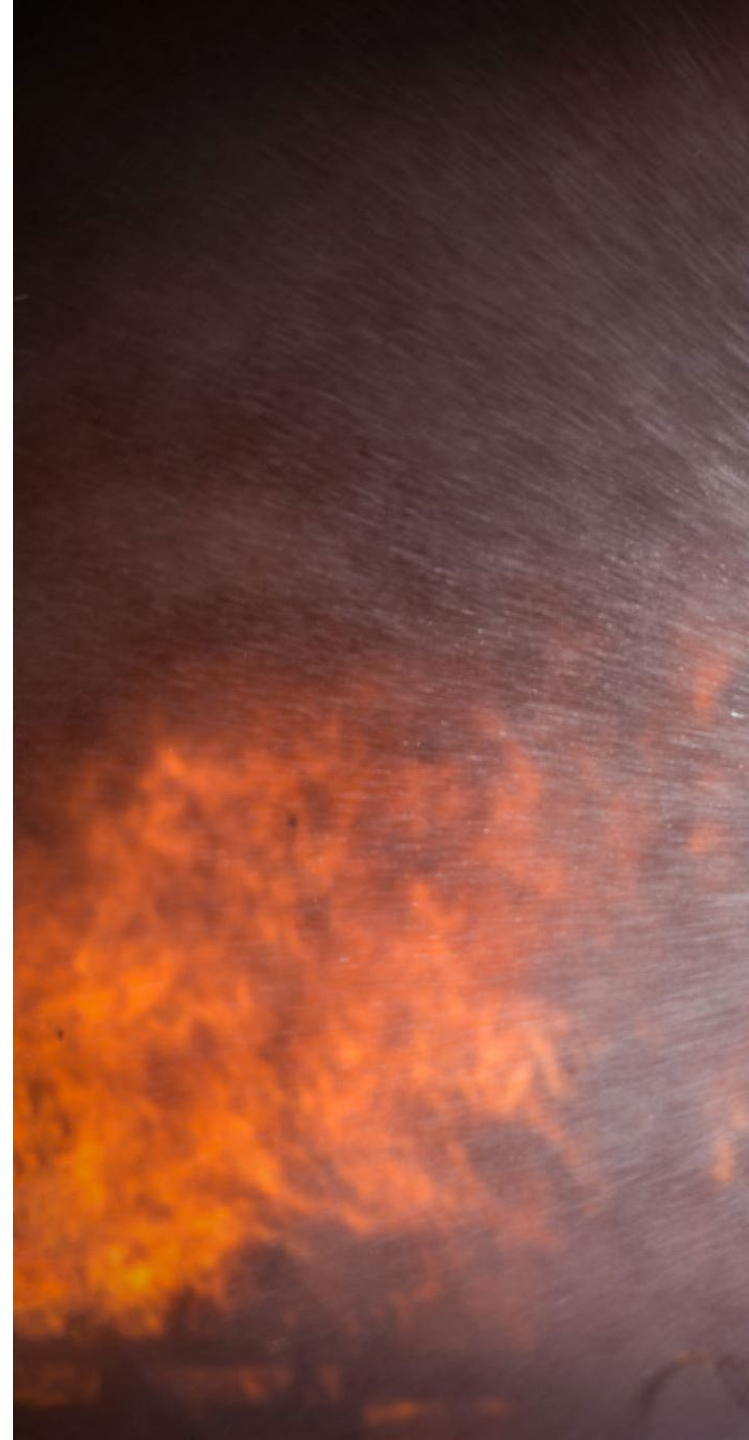
Wendy Matcham
Head of Environmental Hazards and Health
UKRI-NERC

Background

- In 2022 conversations commenced between NERC and NSFC regarding resilience to wildfires.
- In 2023 NERC commissioned a rotator group to review and report on current priorities and opportunities for wildfire research between the UK and the US.
- UKRI (NERC, AHRC, ESRC and EPSRC) worked with NSF to scope a potential collaborative programme.
- In 2025 Canada joined the partnership and the scope expanded
- Joint call launched between UKRI, NSF and the Canada tri-agencies NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR

Rationale

- Wildfires are becoming more frequent, severe, and unpredictable, exposing gaps in how we understand, prepare for, and respond to these events
- Fire researchers and practitioners refer with particular concern to fires at the 'wildland-urban interface' (WUI) where fire behaviour may change unpredictably
- The WUI is identified as a key theme within priority research directions for wildfire science
- Joint call launched between UKRI, NSF and the Canada tri-agencies NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR
- Aligns to the UKRI Climate Adaptation, Environment and Resilience priority area



Scope Overview

This research programme will fund essential interdisciplinary research on the WUI to:

- catalyse new and existing collaborations and strengthen capacity amongst researchers across various jurisdictions in the UK, and the US, or Canada or both
- enhance resilience to wildfire risk in the WUI (for example, environmental, structural, health and community) at the local, regional and national scale

The programme will achieve this through the follow three aims:

- aim one: enhance knowledge and understanding of the risk and vulnerabilities of wildfire occurrence, intensity, behaviour and spread within the WUI under evolving and future fire regime scenarios
- aim two: investigate impacts (for example, environmental, social, cultural, human health, economic, or built environment) of wildfire occurrence in the WUI
- aim three: develop interventions and solutions for adaptation, mitigation, and recovery to wildfire in the WUI

Applications are required to demonstrate how they will advance knowledge and produce solutions focused outcomes against the programme aims. **Applications must address at least two of the programme aims** listed above, of which **one of these must be aim three**.

Key points

- All projects must be collaborative
- Projects must be one of the following collaboration configurations:
 - UK-US-Canada
 - UK-US
 - UK-Canada
- Each UK component can request up to £1,575,000; UKRI will fund 80% of this amount
- Matched equivalent resources are anticipated from participating funders
- There is a mandatory Expression of Interest (EOI) stage
- Projects must be 36 months in duration
- UKRI grants must start by 12th February 2027
- Projects must be interdisciplinary, and on the UK side all applications must cover at least two UKRI-council remits
- One collaborative application should be submitted by the UK project lead to UKRI, detailing the UK and US, Canada, or both, contributions to the project



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How the U.S. community can engage with this opportunity

Kendra McLauchlan - U.S. National Science
Foundation



National Science Foundation Wildland Fire Initiative

wildlandfire@nsf.gov

9 July 2026

NSF has internally coordinated wildland fire science



National Science Foundation Wildland Fire Initiative Working Group

- wildlandfire@nsf.gov
- **Directorate for Biological Sciences**
- **Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering**
- **Directorate for Engineering**
- **Directorate for Geosciences**
- **Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences**
- **Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences**
- **Directorate for STEM Education**
- **Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships**
- **Office of International Science and Engineering**



The trilateral opportunity aligns with NSF's **FIRE** program

Wildland-Urban Interface focus



- **Fire Science Innovations through Research and Education (FIRE) Program**
 - PD 25-345Y
- Supports innovative multidisciplinary and multisector investigations focused on convergent research and education activities in wildland fire.



FIRE-MODEL

New modeling and computational approaches



FIRE WUI

Effort to decrease vulnerability of built infrastructure and the wildland-urban interface



FIRE NET

Promote an innovative approach to wildland fire science through research and education network building

How the Canada community can engage with this opportunity

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research
Council of Canada



Social Sciences and Humanities Research
Council



Canadian Institutes of Health Research



NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR

Funding

- NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR plan to invest \$3M each (total \$9M for Canadian research)
- Each agency expects to fund approx. four projects
- Projects may request budget from one, two or all three Canadian funders.
- Max request \$250K per year, per funder, for 3 years. I.e.,
 - 1 Canadian funder = \$750K max
 - 2 Canadian funders = \$1.5M max
 - 3 Canadian funders = \$2.25M max

Eligibility

- One Canadian project lead should be identified in the UKRI submission as project co-lead (international).
The Canadian project lead is the primary applicant for the NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR grants, and must be a Canadian university researcher eligible to receive NSERC, SSHRC or CIHR funds
- Any co-applicants must also meet NSERC, SSHRC or CIHR eligibility requirements
- Open to research in natural sciences, engineering, social sciences, humanities and health disciplines

NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR

Canada component section of UKRI application, single PDF attachment including:

- Budget document(s), using specific NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR templates. Attach one per funder.
 - Tab 1: proposed expenditures and budget justification
 - Tab 2: list NSERC, SSHRC or CIHR-supported research team and partner organizations (if any)
- Determine whether the grant application aims to advance a sensitive technology research area
 - If “yes”, submit an attestation form for each researcher with a named role
- Identify if the application includes at least one partner organization from the private sector who will be involved in the NSERC, SSHRC or CIHR-funded research activities.
 - If “yes,” complete and attach the Risk Assessment form

[Canadian funding opportunity webpage](#)

Contact for questions on Canadian aspects: RP-Initiatives-PR@nserc-crsng.gc.ca



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How the UK community can engage with this opportunity

Michelle Manning
Senior Programme Manager, Environmental
Hazards and Health
UK Research & Innovation – NERC

UKRI - Eligibility

Standard UKRI eligibility applies for this funding opportunity, this includes:

- higher education providers
- independent research organisations
- public sector research establishments
- UKRI institutes
- Catapults
- NHS bodies

For more information, please visit:

[Research organisations eligible for UKRI funding – UKRI](#)

Non-standard eligibility does not apply for this funding opportunity, organisations therefore not eligible to apply for funding through this funding opportunity include:

- charities
- non-governmental organisations
- government departments
- third sector organisations
- social enterprises
- other educational establishments (for example, a college that does not usually undertake research activities)

UKRI - Remit

This is a cross-Council funding opportunity, all applications must cover at least two UKRI-council remits. These are:

Natural Environment Research Council - [Remit, programmes and priorities – NERC – UKRI](#)

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council - [EPSRC research portfolio and priorities – UKRI](#)

Economic and Social Research Council - [Remit, portfolio and priorities – ESRC – UKRI](#)

Arts and Humanities Research Council - [Remit, programmes and priorities – AHRC – UKRI](#)

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council - [Remit, programmes and priorities – BBSRC – UKRI](#)

Medical Research Council - [Remit, programmes and priorities – MRC – UKRI](#)

Science and Technology Facilities Council - [Remit, portfolio and priorities – STFC – UKRI](#)

- The UK component has a maximum funding per award of 1.575 M pounds at 100% FEC (funded at 80% FEC)

UKRI - Remit

Some indicative areas of interest, although please note that this is not an exhaustive list

- impacts of wildfires on the built environment
- developing interventions and solutions for adaptation, mitigation and recovery which might involve engineers or engineering solutions
- behavioural implications and impact of resilience strategies
- economic impact of solutions
- policy needs
- justice and inclusion
- intersections with cultural heritage (tangible and intangible)
- creative interventions and approaches
- co-creation and other participatory methodologies
- overlaps with place-based research
- understanding fire ecology and predictive tools
- how environmental change will affect fire regimes (extreme weather, land use change and management)
- fuel types and management
- fire breaks, fuel breaks and fire belts
- wildfire movement through urban areas
- transition from smouldering to flaming wildfire
- ecosystem health
- new wildfire data and testing of models
- water & air quality



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How to apply, assessment process and timeline

Natasha Soutar
Programme Manager, Environmental
Hazards and Health
UK Research & Innovation - NERC

How to apply

Stage One: Expression of Interest (Eol):

- You must have submitted an Eol before submitting your full application
- The Eol form will request information on project teams, project description, and remit areas included
- Eols will not be assessed, the information will be used to inform plans for the assessment panel. They are also an opportunity to address any eligibility or remit concerns before full submission
- Nothing provided as part of the Eol step is considered finalised, please complete the Eol to the best of your ability at the time
- We will not respond to all Eols. If you have not been contacted by 14th August 2026, please proceed to submit your full application
- **Deadline: 30th July 2026 (4 PM UK time)**

How to apply

Stage one: expression of interest (Eol)

There is a mandatory Eol stage for this UKRI funding opportunity.

You must submit your Eol by 30 July 2026 at 4:00pm UK time. If a full application is submitted without a prior Eol by the stated deadline, it will be rejected.

[Submit an Eol](#)

The Eol form requests details of the proposed research projects team and a summary of the research project application. This information will not be assessed but will be used to inform plans for the assessment panel. Nothing provided as part of the Eol step is considered finalised, therefore additional partners and project co-leads may be added at a later stage, and the application may change as further details are prepared.

Feedback will not be given for the Eol, unless we have concerns regarding eligibility or the fit to the funding opportunity scope.

Expression of Interest: OPP1118 Enhancing resilience to wildfires in the wildland-urban interface

Overview

Apply for funding to deliver collaborative research projects involving researchers from the UK and the US, Canada, or both, to improve understanding of and resilience to wildfire occurrence and impacts in the wildland-urban interface.

There is a mandatory Expression of Interest (Eol) stage for this UKRI funding opportunity.

To submit an Eol, fill in this form by **30th July 2026 at 4:00pm UK time**. If a full application is submitted without a prior Eol by the stated deadline, it will be rejected.

The Eol form requests details of the proposed research project's team and a summary of the research project application. Please complete the Eol to the best of your ability. This information will not be assessed but will be used to inform plans for the assessment panel. Nothing provided as part of the Eol step is considered finalised, therefore additional partners and project co-leads that meet individual funders' eligibility requirements may be added at a later stage, and the application may change as further details are prepared.

Feedback will not be given for the Eol unless we have concerns regarding eligibility or the fit to the funding opportunity scope. The UK project lead will be the point of contact for any administration on behalf of the collaborative international project team.

Please ensure you have read the [OPP1118 Funding Opportunity](#) page in full, before completing an Eol. Please send questions regarding this Eol stage to wildfires@nerc.ukri.org

[Complete the Eol form >](#)

Closes 30 Jul 2026

Opened 2 Jul 2026

Contact

wildfires@nerc.ukri.org

Audiences

How to apply

Stage Two: Full Application

- We are running this funding opportunity on the new **UKRI Funding Service** so please ensure that your organisation is registered. Only the UK lead research organisation can submit an application to UKRI, as such the UK project lead is responsible for completing the application process on the Funding Service, but we expect all team members and project partners to contribute to the application.
- **Deadline: 1st October 2026** (4 PM UK time)

The links to complete an EoI and start your full application can be found on the [funding opportunity webpage](#)

wildfires@nerc.ukri.org



Funding opportunity

Enhancing resilience to wildfires in the wildland-urban interface

Opportunity status:	Open
Funders:	UK Research and Innovation
Co-funders:	U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
Funding type:	Grant
Total fund:	£10,000,000
Maximum award:	£1,575,000
Publication date:	2 July 2026
Opening date:	2 July 2026 9:00am UK time
Closing date:	1 October 2026 4:00pm UK time

Last updated: 8 July 2026 - [see all updates](#)

[Start application ►](#)

Timeline

- 2 July 2026 9:00am
Opening date
- 9 July 2026 5:00pm
Webinar
- 30 July 2026 4:00pm
EoI closing date
- 1 October 2026 4:00pm
Closing date
- No later than 12 February 2027
Grant start

[Print this guidance or save as PDF](#)

Assessment Process

Assessment Panel:

Applications will go to a panel of independent, international experts who will make a funding recommendation. Participating funders will make the final funding decision.

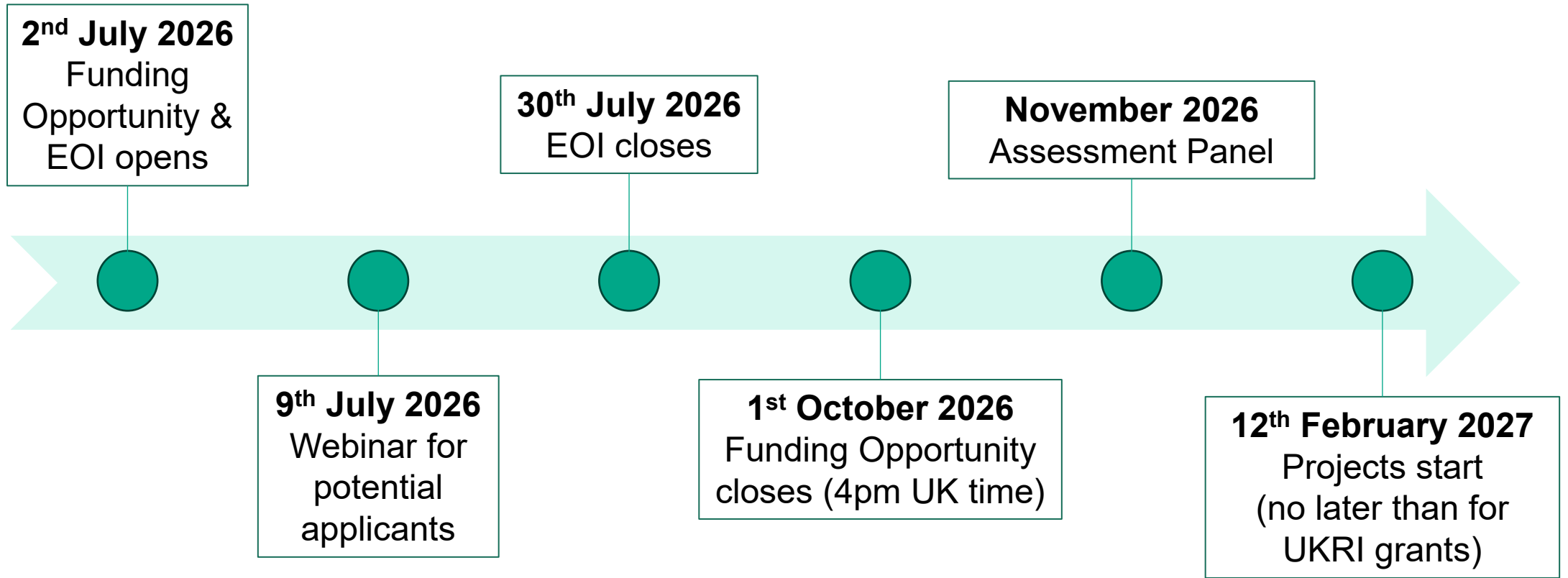
There will be no response stage for this funding opportunity, the proposed projects will be assessed purely on their application against the published assessment criteria.

The assessment areas are:

- vision
- approach
- applicant and team capability to deliver
- ethics and responsible research and innovation
- resources and cost justification (including US and Canada components)

For more information on how applications are assessed, please visit: [How we make decisions – UKRI](#)

Timeline



Pre-submitted Questions & Answers

Live Questions & Answers

Next Steps

- We will publish this webinar's recording and slides on the funding opportunity webpage
- We will compile answers to all questions submitted to us, including those we weren't able to answer in this session, and circulate these via email to all registered attendees as well as publish these on the funding opportunity webpage
- We will circulate the names and bios of all who consented to this at webinar registration for the purpose of facilitating connections

Thank you