ARIES
DOCTORAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

Handbook 2021-22

For students and supervisors

Contents

Introduction

I am delighted to welcome you to the ARIES Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) funded by the UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC).

You are joining an existing community of over 100 DTP students. We hope that you will both feel the excitement of being a part of something new and be able to benefit from our five years' experience of training DTP PGRs (PGRs is the acronym we use to refer to Postgraduate Researchers).

Most ARIES postgraduate researchers are directly funded by ARIES, and will have attended our DTP interview in February 2020. Others are funded by other means and have joined as ARIES-Associated PGRs to benefit from our training, and from our supportive, sociable and close-knit community. Whatever the means of funding, all ARIES students are working in NERC science, and almost all will be working within one or more of the five ARIES themes.

We hope you will find your doctorate to be an exciting and rewarding experience. ARIES training is dynamic, with new opportunities emerging all the time. It is a good idea therefore, to keep coming back to the online version of this handbook as we continuously update it.

We are always happy to hear your feedback, and your suggestions of how to improve the PGR experience. The sections of the handbook below give details of the ARIES training programme, the minimum expectations of the DTP with regard to the training you should undertake, and an overview of opportunities created by the Partnership.

I very much hope you enjoy the coming years studying with us.

Bill Sturges

Director, EnvEast and ARIES NERC Doctoral Training Partnerships

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The ARIES DTP is committed to equality, diversity, widening participation and inclusion in its work with students, supervisors and partners; and in its interaction with the research community and beyond. Everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed in an environment which enables them to do so.

The full ARIES statement on Equality, Diversity, and Widening Participation is available online.

ARIES-Funded and Associated Students

ARIES postgraduate researchers (PGRs) are funded through two main routes:

1. A majority of ARIES PGRs are directly funded by the DTP using a grant provided by NERC (we will refer to these as "ARIES-funded" from here on).

2. A second group of ARIES students are funded by other means (e.g. overseas government scholarship), but are considered part of ARIES for training and development purposes. We refer to these as "Associated" PGRs.

There are some important distinctions between ARIES-funded and Associated students which are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Distinctions between DTP-funded and Associated ARIES PGRs

	ARIES-funded	**Associated**
ARIES-Funded or Associated?	Interviewed by the ARIES Interview Panels and were sent an ARIES studentship offer.	Your Supervisor applied for you to become an ARIES-Associated PGR.
Source of funding	Funded by the ARIES DTP. Most will also be co-funded by an ARIES partner.	Variety of funding sources, both UK and International.
Length of funded period	Usually 3 years 6 months.	Usually either 3 or 4 years.
Training	Expected to take part in all ARIES mandatory cohort training. Eligible to attend all other ARIES-sponsored training and development activities at no cost.	Expected to take part in all ARIES mandatory cohort training. Eligible to attend all other ARIES-sponsored training and development activities, *but there may be additional cost.*

A small number of ARIES-funded students will already have been recruited through a special programme to attract scientists from quantitative backgrounds to Environmental Science research. Your studentships are for a period of 3 years and 9 months, which will enable you to undertake between 40 and 60 credits worth of taught Masters level modules, usually at the start of your doctorate. You are still required to submit your thesis within 4 years.

If you are unsure, at the outset of your PhD you should clarify with your supervisor the source(s) of your funding and the length of your studentship.

ARIES students are registered at one of five Universities and may be based at a number of other host institutes for all or part of their doctorate

ARIES and Your Host University

We understand that ARIES students will have multiple affiliations. You may for example, feel yourself affiliated to your supervisor(s); to a research or laboratory group; a department; a university and/or research institute, as well as, we hope, feeling like an ARIES student.

The respective roles of these different groups may not always be obvious, and especially so, perhaps, when it comes to ARIES and your university of registration.

You should remember that it is your university that will award your PhD, and it is your university's regulations and guidance that you should comply with as you progress through your doctorate. Generally speaking, it is your university that you will need to ask about such things as stipend payments, progress review meetings (or 'Boards'), or library access; or if you run into problems of some sort. You might communicate with your university through your supervisor(s), or graduate school/doctoral college, or other administrative department.

Where ARIES has requirements of its students (for example, we require students to submit written work for their annual progress reviews), these are generally intended to mirror those of its partner universities. You can be reasonably certain that if you are meeting the expectations of your university, you are also meeting the requirements of ARIES.

In case of any uncertainty, please contact ARIES to ask any questions you might have: aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk.
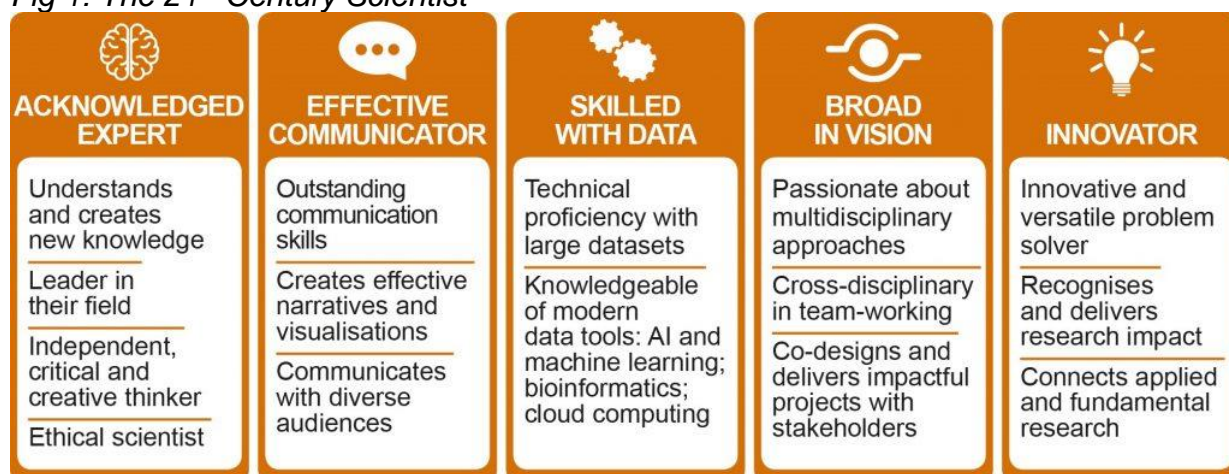
Training

ARIES Training Plan

The ARIES Vision:

"To train PhD students with excellent potential from across society, equipping them with the necessary skills to become 21st Century Scientists: leaders in the science and sustainable business of the natural environment"

ARIES aims to provide an excellent programme of cohort-based training that will support not only your PhD thesis work, but also your future career. We offer multiple opportunities for advanced and transferable skills training, aiming to broaden your horizons and develop a valuable professional & support network. ARIES PGRs are trained in 5 key areas through the mandatory whole-cohort training events:

Fig 1: The 21st Century Scientist

ACKNOWLEDGED EXPERT	EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR	SKILLED WITH DATA	BROAD IN VISION	INNOVATOR
Understands and creates new knowledge	Outstanding communication skills	Technical proficiency with large datasets	Passionate about multidisciplinary approaches	Innovative and versatile problem solver
Leader in their field	Creates effective narratives and visualisations	Knowledgeable of modern data tools: AI and machine learning; bioinformatics; cloud computing	Cross-disciplinary in team-working	Recognises and delivers research impact
Independent, critical and creative thinker	Communicates with diverse audiences		Co-designs and delivers impactful projects with stakeholders	Connects applied and fundamental research
Ethical scientist				

Our Doctoral Training programme is designed to:

- Develop cohorts of PGRs with advanced skills and knowledge, multidisciplinary outlooks, and potential to operate successfully across all postgraduate careers
- Provide you with the foundation research skills necessary to quickly and efficiently begin your planned programme of research;
- Ensure you engage with interfaces between science and societal needs by developing your ability to achieve non-academic impact and effective public engagement.
- Provide you with continuing personal and professional training in non-research specific areas, for example in enterprise, innovation, multidisciplinary working, and science communication;

- Train you to understand modern methods of data management, interrogation, analysis and presentation, from bioinformatics to artificial intelligence
- Offer you career-specific training and support at every stage towards a successful transition to post-PhD employment.

The Framework

Our training programme is designed around the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF)[1], a framework which articulates the knowledge, behaviours and attributes of researchers such as yourselves. It is a helpful tool to identify goals for your training development and is summarised in the diagram below.

Figure 2: The RDF Planner
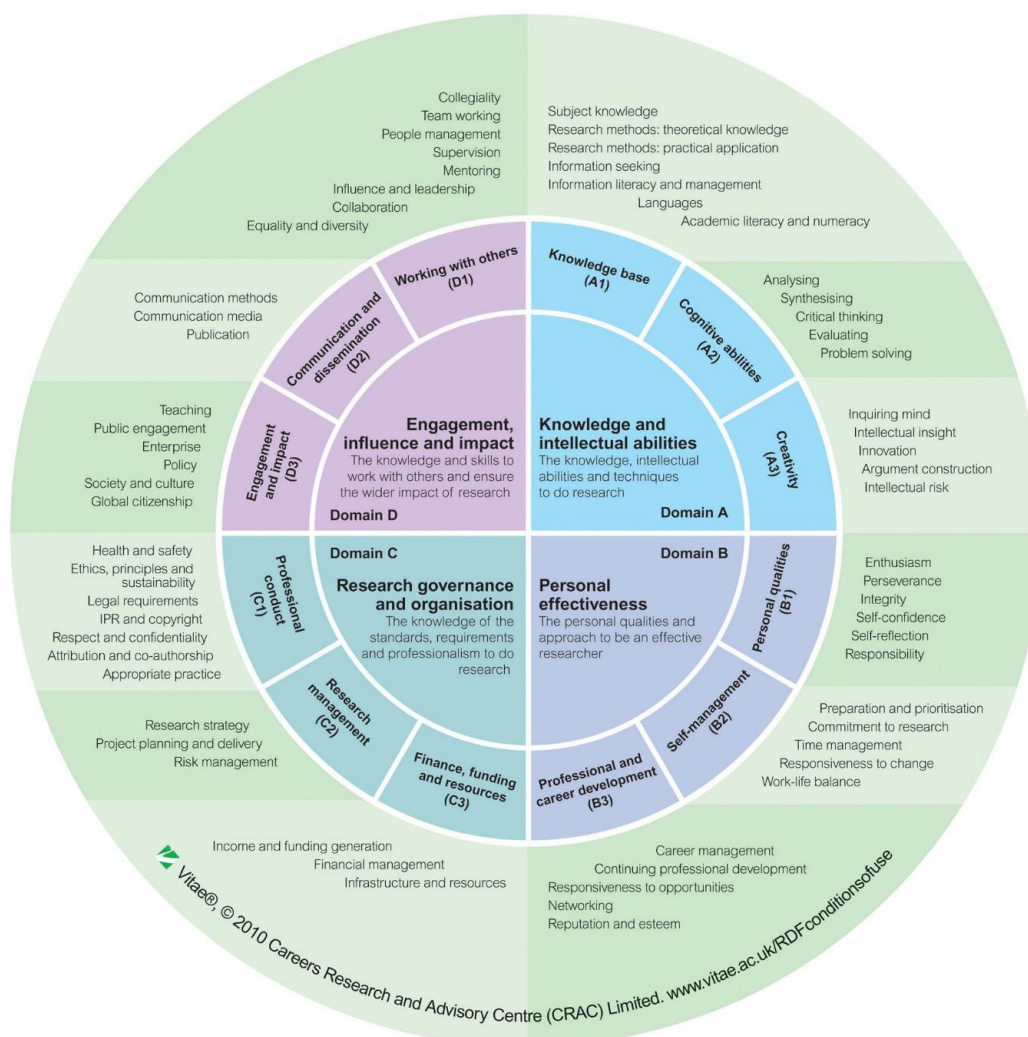
Further information on the RDF and how we use it to support your training and development is provided at your induction.

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[1] https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers-professional-development/about-the-vitae-researcher-development-framework

Your Health and Wellbeing

Staying healthy is important to get the most out of your PhD and opportunities within the DTP – it's easy to get caught up in your research and training, and forget that maintaining a healthy body and mind will bring you better results and give you a better experience while you are studying with us and develop important benefits for the future. We encourage you to remain as physically active as you are able, and to integrate good practices to maintain your mental wellbeing. This might be as simple as planning to take regular breaks, finding a way to incorporate regular exercise, or working to identify and minimise triggers for a drop in mental health. There will be opportunities at our cohort events to take part in physical activities and learn more about practical tools to look after your health and wellbeing.

Tracking your Training – the TNA

You will identify your own training needs using our Training Needs Assessment (TNA) system, the mechanism by which you can regularly assess your own progress and goals with the support and advice of your supervisor(s) and the ARIES Training and Progression Panel (TPP). The TNA gives you a useful framework to reflect on your skills as a researcher, set your goals for the future, and build a portfolio of evidence that you can draw on for progress review meetings during your doctorate, and in future job applications.

You will have responsibility for tracking your training and development, and we encourage you to discuss your TNAs with your supervisors(s), both informally and as part of your formal progress review meetings. The TNA is **your** tool, and will help you think carefully about where you want to be at the end of your PhD (and beyond), and how you can get there. Further information on the TNA will be provided at induction.

Annual Report

ARIES will also ask you to submit a report each Summer, to collect data on your activities over the past year. This also gives us the opportunity to gather feedback from our students – we value your feedback enormously so please do let us know your thoughts. Among other things, the report will ask you for any highlights from the last year (conference presentations, publications, public engagement events, etc).

UKRI-funded PGRs will find that they are also required to complete an annual online survey of their research, engagement, and other activities known as ResearchFish. Your university will coordinate their own ResearchFish submission and contact you directly.

The reporting requirements for ARIES PGRs are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Reporting requirements for all ARIES PGRs

Year 1	Within 6 weeks of starting your PhD	ARIES Initial TNA form
	June/July (precise date to be emailed)	Annual Report & ARIES TNA Confirmation that you have produced a literature review & PhD research proposal
Year 2 Year 3 Year 4	June/July (precise date to be emailed)	Annual Report & ARIES TNA Confirmation that you have submitted the required written work as part of your annual review process

Copies of these forms are available from the [ARIES website](#).

Expected level of training

Students are often keen to know how much training they are required to complete during their PhD. To answer this it is important to first understand how we classify training within ARIES:

Advanced Research Training – This training might be specific to DTP students or to specific groups of students and provides the skills needed to undertake a PhD within a particular research area. It also covers training in the translation of research into practice (e.g. environmental modelling, advanced statistics).

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – This is the process of enhancing your transferable skills, either through formal training courses, or 'experientially' by reflecting on your practice. (e.g. presenting science, time or project management skills).

Careers Training – The purpose of this training is to enhance your employability and make the most of the skills that you already have and will gain through your PhD. It may also serve to broaden your horizons by helping you to understand some of the sectors where your skills might be applied – and valued by employers (e.g. CV development; interview techniques)

Experiential learning – Where you lead your own training (e.g. convening a seminar series) or where you learn from taking part in an activity (e.g. presenting at seminars and conferences; working as a demonstrator to support student learning).

The amount of training required will depend on your pre-existing skills, your research programme and your career plans. Our expectation is that, by the end of your studentship, you will have achieved phase 3 in at least six items from across the four RDF domains of the Planner and phase 4 in at least two.

In order to meet the expectations above, you will need to undertake training over and above the ARIES programme of cohort training. ARIES recognises that each student will be different, but we expect that this training might cover the following:

- *Advanced Research Training* required for you to effectively carry out your programme of research, leading to the submission of your thesis. This may be achieved through one or several training activities (taught courses, self-study, peer learning, and individual instruction with your supervisor or research group), and we expect will consist of a minimum of 5 days of tuition per year.
- Additional *Advanced Research Training* beyond your immediate research area to achieve advanced capabilities in other areas of the environmental sciences, such as statistics, data management, coding and/or modelling.
- *CPD* to achieve a broad portfolio of transferable skills for the workplace, which is likely to require an investment in 2 days training per year. This might include training in - for example - media/public engagement, innovation/enterprise, time management, project management, etc.
- *Careers training* such as interview skills and writing effective job applications.
- Delivering a presentation (oral or poster) at an international conference.
- Additional *experiential learning activities* such as writing a blogpost or article, contributing to the E^{3}I student club's activities, delivering a research seminar/presentation to your research group/department, etc.

ARIES Cohort Training

The ARIES system of whole-cohort training builds a networked group of scientists working across NERC's science remit, and across the Partnership. We focus our training into a few residential events which both enables you to focus on your research for longer periods, and provides a space in which you can gain some distance from your PhD and reflect on how things are going with the support of your peers.

ARIES cohort training is delivered to **all** its PGRs in a series of mandatory events. Students will only be excused under exceptional circumstances (e.g. where there is an unavoidable clash with fieldwork). These events are listed below and details of many of the sessions are provided in Annex 1. It is important that you consider this list when making choices of other training to take – otherwise you may duplicate training that will be delivered through our cohort events.

Compliance

ARIES takes its responsibility to train its students seriously, and expects its students to fulfil their obligations for training and reporting. Failure to attend mandatory training or to complete the requisite reporting by the agreed dates will result in suspension of access to ARIES funding and/or training. This suspension will remain

in force until all such obligations are fulfilled, or until a request for a waiver on the grounds of *exceptional* extenuating circumstances is received and approved by the Strategy Board (or the Director acting on their behalf).

If you cannot attend mandatory training due to an exceptional circumstance (e.g. an unavoidable clash with fieldwork), then you must notify us in advance.

Independent Research Impact Advisors (IRIAs)

All ARIES PGRs have been appointed an "Independent Research Impact Advisor" (IRIA) who is independent of the supervisory team, and there for you as an additional source of support and guidance.

IRIAs are specifically tasked with discussing the impact of your research beyond the purely academic, and helping you to reflect on your career aspirations and professional development. They might also offer advice, for example, on securing an internship or employment and, where appropriate, act as an important sounding board that is independent of your supervisory board.

Your IRIA has been hand-picked by ARIES and your supervisor from our extensive partnership, and all are excited about the prospect of working alongside of you. Our expectation is that you will be in contact with your IRIA early in your PhD, and that you will, at the very least, meet with them 'formally' at least once per year, either in person or via Skype etc. Such formal meetings will take the form of an appraisal, giving you the opportunity to reflect on your past achievements and set goals for the future. We envisage that the outcomes of such meetings will inform your annual TNA submissions.

Table 3: Mandatory Cohort Training Events Please note these dates in your diary, and note that some events require advanced preparation (see Appendix for details)

Year 1

18-20 October 2021	**Induction**	
Introduction to ARIES		The ARIES training vision
Wellbeing, Equality and Diversity		Kickstart your PhD
Data management and record keeping		Hints and tips
The student-supervisor relationship		Innovation and the E^{3}I club
Where could ARIES take you?		Your TNA
24-26 Nov 2021	**Winter School**	
Elevator Pitches and Posters		The NERC big picture
Ethics, rigour, respect, and responsibility		Multidisciplinarity
Working with your IRIA		Working with Data
Impactful environmental science		Time management
Building a Profile		Oil Spill Grand Challenge
March 2022 (TBC)	**CADA (C-CLEAR-ARIES Doctoral Alliance) inter-cohort student conference** in collaboration with C-CLEAR DTP *CADA is optional for first-year students*	
27 June-2 July 2022	**Y1 Summer School**	
Where could ARIES take you?		Academic publishing workshop
Academic writing		Multidisciplinary challenges workshop
Science Communication		Emotional resilience
Big Data		Innovation and the E^{3}I club

Year 2

April 2023 (TBC)	**CADA inter-cohort student conference** *CADA is mandatory for second-year students, and all students are required to present (poster or oral) at some time during their PhD*
April 2023 (TBC)	**Student Retreat** – student organised event

Year 3

March/April 2024	**CADA inter-cohort student conference** *CADA is mandatory for third-year students*	
June 2024 (TBC)	**Y3 Summer School**	
Career Development		Writing your thesis
Reviewing and refereeing papers		Writing proposals
CV & Interview workshops		Preparing for your viva
Impact of research and knowledge exchange		Surviving the next 18 months

Other ARIES Opportunities

From time to time ARIES sponsors training events. Details will be sent out by email, and/or in the ARIES-EnvEast Facebook group, and via Twitter @ARIES_DTP.

Student-led Activities

Some of the activities associated with ARIES are student-led; participation is strongly encouraged. Taking a co-ordinating role in any of these activities provides valuable learning opportunities and transferable skills.

SciEnvy

The SciEnvy blog evolved out of a local blog run by some of the EnvEast cohort. It has since expanded to all PGRs and Early Career Scientists with an interest in environmental science and with well over 10,000 reads to date (>5,000 unique visitors), but is still very much a project of the EnvEast and ARIES teams. This is your chance to get involved, make your voice heard, and at the same time practise writing for different audiences.

E³I Student Innovation Club

The E³I (Environmental Enterprise, Engagement and Innovation) is a DTP-funded student innovation club, which promotes and funds activities related to the broad definition of "innovation", including activities related to public outreach/engagement activities, innovation-related training, seminars, and competitive awards for individuals to attend meetings or participate in enterprise activities. Get involved and help define how this funding is used. Information and links to social media can be found on the ARIES website.

The E3i club has equipment for activities in keeping with its aims, including two digital SLRs, microphones, two GoPro cameras, and two high specification laptops with Adobe all apps installed (including Illustrator, After Effects, Premiere Pro). To arrange a loan of any of this equipment, please email aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk.

Student-led training

EnvEast/ARIES runs a rolling call for training proposals. These are considered for funding by the Strategy Board three times per year. ARIES students are welcome to submit proposals - further details will be available shortly.

Institutional training

As an ARIES student, you have access to a wealth of expertise across the Partnership. Many courses covering generic research, transferable skills and advanced training are offered at all five ARIES universities, so there should be no need to travel. Details of how to access training is provided to you at your university induction (contact your graduate school/doctoral college if not). Additionally, postgraduate researchers can usually access MSc modules if these will fill a gap in their subject knowledge that is key to the success of their research project. You are strongly advised to discuss with your supervisor any additional training courses you would like to attend. They will be able to advise you on the most opportune time to undertake additional training such that you can take best advantage of the content.

Ordinarily it is expected that students will attend training at their host institute, but where training requirements can only be met by other institutes within the DTP, ARIES students should be able to access that training by arrangement with the relevant department (subject to availability of places). For help making such inter-institute arrangements, please contact the Rosie at aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk.

Finally, for ARIES-funded students only, funds are available to enable you to attend training outside the DTP, if the required training is not available within the Partnership. The application process is outlined below, in the 'Applying for Funds from ARIES section.

NERC Training and Internships

NERC fund several series of training events, which are usually free to attend for NERC-funded students. PGRs not funded by NERC may apply, but might take lower priority or have to pay.

NERC Advanced Training Short Courses (ATSCs)

These courses offer training in specific research skills linked to specialist areas of the environmental sciences, and advanced transferable skills such as statistics, programming, and modelling. We will do our best to promote these opportunities as they come up, but you should check the NERC website from time to time.

Environment Young Entrepreneurs Scheme (YES)

This scheme provides training to teams of early career researchers with an interest in commercialising their research. Teams then enter a competition somewhat along the lines of "Dragon's Den". The winners receive a substantial prize and the chance to pitch internationally. Information can be found on the Environment YES website.

NERC Policy Internships

This scheme places research students in influential public policy organisations for a three-month placement. Students continue to receive their stipend, and their studentship is extended by three months to make up the lost time. The application process is highly competitive and you will need to submit a "funding and permissions form", which you should send in to aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk for approval before submitting your online application form. ARIES has funding for up to two Policy Internships per year. Details are available on the Policy Internship website.

If successful you may also need to comply with the regulations and processes of your University of Registration in order to seek formal permission for interrupting your studies.

Other Internships

We do not presently have a formalised internship scheme within the DTP. Many of the partner Universities do however operate such schemes. ARIES actively encourages all PGRs to consider undertaking some form of placement. Many of you will do so because you hold a CASE award. From time-to-time NERC also makes awards of "National Productivity Innovation Fund" internships. You may wish to discuss this with your IRIA. Nearly all of our Collaborative Partners have told us that they would be willing to host one or more internships/placements. These can take place during the period of study (not recommended in the first year), or could be after you have completed your thesis. Please feel free to discuss this with us.

NERC Data Management Online Training

Data management has been identified as a key skills gap in the environmental sector and is likely to be of great value to both your PhD and your post-PhD career, whichever sector you decide to join.

NERC have granted funding to the Data Tree Consortium to deliver free online data management training.

NERC Research centre training programme

NERC's Research Centres (including the British Antarctic and Geological Surveys, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, National Centre for Atmospheric Science) offer a wide range of training courses that are open to NERC students.

ARIES and your University Training Requirements

As well as meeting ARIES training requirements, PGRs must satisfy the training requirements of their University of Registration. You should refer to your graduate school/doctoral college/supervisor for further guidance. ARIES has negotiated some dispensations with our partner universities, which are detailed below.

UEA: As an ARIES student (both ARIES-funded and Associated), your training is according to the ARIES Doctoral Training Pathway, and it is this document that you should refer to rather than the SCI Faculty or SSF Faculty Training Pathway. You are **not** required to complete the UEA TNA .

Essex: Proficio is an innovative professional development scheme for doctoral students, unique to Essex. Your Proficio account will be credited with £2,000 during the course of your studies to spend on a variety of courses to support your professional skills development. In addition, a conference fund of £500 is available. Your supervisor will support you to identify your training needs, but you can browse search and book places on training courses through the portal.

Kent: The University of Kent Graduate School runs a Researcher Development Programme, designed to equip postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers with a range of research and transferable skills. ARIES students based at Kent will be encouraged to take full advantage of the wide variety of workshops and online training available through this programme which is organised around the domains of Vitae's Researcher Development Framework. The only compulsory workshop PhD students are required to attend is 'Kickstart your PhD: Guidance, Skills and the Researcher Development Assessment'. Kent PhD students are **not** required to complete the Kent RDA

Plymouth: ARIES students based in Plymouth must meet the requirements of their university of registration, but can access the University of Plymouth Doctoral College's Researcher Development Programme, which offers a wide range of courses and sessions to help you develop and broaden your research and transferable skills. You may need to contact researchskills@plymouth.ac.uk to arrange attending courses there.

Royal Holloway: Royal Holloway's Researcher Development Programme is a series of courses, online training, webinars and opportunities designed for research students to help develop their professional, transferable, research and writing skills. This programme is offered as *part* of the training requirements, and it is up to each researcher to decide which courses on the programme they will find useful.

A plea for help

If you know or hear of any training courses or other events that may be of interest to others in the cohort, please contact us to let us know (email: aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk).

Publications, conferences, success stories

Acknowledgement of ARIES

ARIES-funded students **must** acknowledge NERC and ARIES in any outputs arising from your PhD. You can download ARIES logos (for posters, email signatures, etc) from the ARIES website, and our grant number is NE/S007334/1. NERC logos can be downloaded via https://nerc.ukri.org/about/enquiries/logos/.

Acknowledgements should take the form:

 "This work was supported by the Natural Environment Research Council and ARIES DTP [grant number NE/S007334/1]"

NERC/ARIES/EnvEast must also be acknowledged in outputs produced using equipment (etc) bought by us. This includes, for example, video footage shot or edited using E3i equipment (cameras, laptops, Adobe software), which was purchased using NERC funds granted to EnvEast, grant number **NE/L002582/1**.

Please tell us about your publications, conferences, outreach work, public engagement events, and any other success stories related to your PhD, as we do not always hear of them.

Email: aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/253659944804893/

Twitter: @ARIES_DTP

Applying for Funds from ARIES

Your Research Budget should cover costs associated with your PhD research. However funds are available from the DTP for the following purposes, depending on whether or not you are ARIES-funded or ARIES-associated. We have published guidance on claiming for travel and subsistence expenses. In all cases, you will need to be up-to-date with your mandatory cohort training and TNA reporting to be eligible for DTP-funds.

All Students (ARIES-Funded & Associated Students)

Attendance at cohort training events
ARIES will cover reasonable[2] travel/subsistence expenses arising from attendance at DTP cohort training events (Induction, Winter/Summer Schools, etc.) where these are not based at your host Institute/University. Complete the relevant expenses form and send it to us along with receipts. We cannot reimburse expenses unless they are evidenced by receipts showing the amount, date, time, and location (so some credit card receipts may not be acceptable).

Please note that expenses are reimbursed by bank transfer, usually within two weeks of your claim being received by the ARIES administrators.

ARIES-funded Students

ARIES retains a budget of £2,500 per student over and above the research costs originally awarded for the studentship project. These funds may be used only within your funded period (usually 3.5 years), to:

- Present research at one or more conferences or meetings
- Attend supervisory meetings away from host institute, if needed (both the student's and supervisors' costs can be claimed)
- Undertake training where the training cannot be accessed for less within the ARIES partnership.
- Travel for educational purposes, including the purchase of a railcard to support same.
- Membership of learned societies when justified

These funds may NOT be used to:

- Meet costs that have been included in the Research Budget (e.g. lab consumables)
- Purchase equipment (such as computers)

Expenses up to £500 for a particular activity can be claimed by sending relevant receipts and a completed expense form to the ARIES administrators (aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk).

Where you wish to apply for funds to attend an external non-ARIES sponsored training activity, and the cost is greater than £500, then the need for this training, though not necessarily the means of delivery, should usually have been noted in a previous TNA.

For activities costing £500 or more, a [financial assistance form](#) must be submitted for consideration in advance of the planned expenditure. If approved, you will then be able to claim back the expenses from ARIES, on production of the relevant receipts and completion of an expenses form. ARIES expects students to investigate all other possible sources of funding (travel bursaries from the conference organisers or from learned societies, early-bird registration, student discount rates, etc.) before applying to this fund, and the supervisor's support is required.

Further details and regulations for these headings can be found below.

Travel

If specific provision is not made in the Research Budget, then ARIES-funded PGRs may claim funds to cover travel and subsistence costs for:
- Essential training courses at partner institutes or elsewhere (e.g. for NERC-funded courses) where this is not covered by a bursary
- Visiting co-supervisors at another institute in the UK
- Essential travel for their supervisors to attend supervisory meetings, or provide in-field training of their ARIES PGR(s)

Simply submit your travel claim form after completing your travel.

Training courses

As with the travel fund requests, you will need to be up-to-date with your mandatory cohort training and TNA reporting. You will usually need to show that the need for this training was noted in a previous TNA. You should discuss this with your supervisor before proceeding.

Conference attendance

ARIES expects the PGRs it funds to present their work at a major international conference or similar event (please note that international conferences are not necessarily located outside of the UK!); and hopes that many of its PGRs will also present their work at national meetings etc.

Forms

All the relevant expense claim and financial assistance forms can be found on the [ARIES website](#). Forms should be completed electronically and sent to aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk along with copies of any relevant receipts/tickets etc. Expenses cannot be reimbursed without supporting receipts.

ARIES Data Management Policy

The ARIES DTP recognises and abides by the [NERC Data Policy](). If you are ARIES funded then your data (including model-generated data) should be made openly available within two years of collection, and placed in a NERC data centre (or suitable equivalent). The aim is that all NERC-funded environmentally-related data are managed and made available for the long-term use of anybody without any restrictions. This extends to publications too; these must be published in Open Access journals or related media under a "Creative Commons" licence or similar. Your university may have funds to support the cost of this.

We note that in some circumstances there may be confidentiality agreements in place, possibly where CASE partnerships are involved. You are advised to discuss this with the ARIES Management and your local research contracts office if it would result in data being withheld from the public domain for more than 2 years.

These provisions apply to ARIES-funded PGRs only. Different data management rules may apply to Associated ARIES PGRs.

NERC Data Centres are listed here: http://www.nerc.ac.uk/research/sites/data/.

Data security and the handling of personally sensitive information is both your responsibility, and the responsibility of individual institutes. It is strongly recommended that all ARIES students undergo training on good data security practice (such as the NERC Data Tree on line training mentioned above) and on their obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Most Universities have excellent on line self-study courses on compliance with GDPR.

Related to this is a need to ensure that you do not inadvertently breach copyright regulations when presenting your research, publishing, or teaching. Most Universities also have excellent on line resources outlining good practice. There is also a brief [ARIES presentation]() on this.

Governance of the DTP

ARIES is run by a Strategy Board (SB) that includes members from hosting partners who have experience in training research students. The Board meets twice each year, in September/October and May/June.

The training and progression panel (TPP) reports to the Strategy Board, and its role is to ensure excellence and coherence in the provision of training, and to review student progress. The TPP meets twice a year.

We also have an Advisory Board (AB) comprising individuals in senior positions in UK business and government agencies. The Advisory Board provides advice to the Stategy Board.

You can find the members of the AB, SB, and TPP on the [ARIES website](#).

Student representative(s) to both groups are elected by each cohort every two years to provide student feedback to the DTP.

The first point of contact for routine matters relating to ARIES are the DTP administrators. You can contact them at aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk.

Terms and Conditions

All studentships funded by NERC (including those awarded through the NERC DTPs) must adhere to the harmonised [Research Councils Terms and Conditions](#) and associated guidance.

Additional DTP-specific guidance can be found on the [NERC DTP](#) web pages.

Information for Supervisors

In addition to mandatory cohort training, ARIES PGRs also have defined expectations of the additional training we **expect** them to engage in, plus written work that they **must** carry out (see Expected level of training, above). Supervisors should oversee their execution of, and provide feedback to the student on, these written assignments: in most cases they are no more than the draft thesis chapters that you would in any case be expecting them to provide at appropriate times.

ARIES also takes a proactive approach to tracking the training progress of PGRs. They are required, in conversation with you, to conduct an Initial Training Needs Analysis (TNA), and then update this annually. The ARIES Training and Progression Panel reviews their assessments at these milestones and provides feedback.

Please note that ARIES-funded students are usually awarded a 3.5 year studentship, including a Research Budget. DTP funding will not be available beyond the 3.5 year funded-period, even though they have a 4 year deadline to submit their thesis.

ARIES is a partnership that sits outside of the HEIs and institutes, and has a responsibility to capture data for reporting to our funders. This may mean that there is some duplication of reporting also required by your home institute (we are not able to retrieve any useful data from ResearchFish, for example). We have worked to streamline forms and avoid duplication wherever possible, but hope you will appreciate that there are difficulties in developing uniform procedures that work across five different Universities and nine non-University research organisation hosts.

Supervisor FAQ

What if a student can't attend mandatory cohort training events because of fieldwork commitments etc?
- Fieldwork etc should, be planned around ARIES training events. If this is not possible then students must request leave to miss mandatory training by completing a [comprehensive form](#) and sending it to aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk. Students that miss training will be required to demonstrate (with evidence) that they have undertaken alternative training to cover the DTP training that was missed. In some cases (e.g. a missed Winter or Summer School), they might elect to attend the School the following year.

What's the total time spent training over the lifetime of an ARIES PhD?
- We calculate that ARIES training takes about 20 days over the 3.5 years of the studentship. Time spent undertaking additional/institutional training will be dependent on individual students' training needs and the requirements of their host institute.

Who applies for funding from ARIES for travel/subsistence/training/conferences – the student, or the supervisor?
- For activities costing £500 or more, students should apply in advance of any expenditure using the [financial assistance form](#). For activities costing less than £500, students should submit a completed [expense form](#) to aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk.

- Where an external training course costing more than £500 is proposed, then this training should have been foreseen in a previous TNA. We will need to be satisfied that such training is necessary for completion on the PGRs thesis work, is not available elsewhere for less expense within the DTP and NERC-sponsored courses, and that it offers good value for money from the public purse.

  Each ARIES student has a budget of £2500 (held centrally by ARIES) for costs under these headings.

Are reporting requirements the same for 'ARIES-Associated' students?
- Yes.

Will the ARIES NERC DTP be sharing training activities/events with other DTPs?
- Yes. The DTP has also noted the existence of DTNs (Doctoral Training Networks) where DTPs come together to form larger cohorts for some training events.

- NERC DTPs have recently formalised an arrangement where training activities with extra capacity are open to all NERC DTP students. These will be advertised via the monthly e-bulletin.

How will the ARIES NERC DTP draw in and stimulate studentships beyond those it immediately funds?

- Over the first three cohorts the 36 notional studentships awarded by NERC were extended to 58 by co-funding from partners and external sources.

Additionally, the DTP seeks nominations to its training programme annually, so delivering its training and other benefits to a wider cohort. In this way it seeks to spread best practice in doctoral training and prevent non-DTP students from being isolated. Over the five years of EnvEast, 51 non-DTP students were added to the training cohort.

Will there be funding available for students to attend training outside the DTP?
- Yes, if the training is not available at partner institutes. Students recruited through the DTP will be able to apply for funding from the DTP. ARIES-associated students will be able to apply to their home institutes as above. In both cases, it is expected that students seek alternate funding (e.g. from learned societies) first.

Will my student be able to access their RTSG beyond the 3.5 year funded period of the studentship?
- No. ARIES studentships are (usually) for a duration of 3.5 years and although the student has 4 years to complete their studentship we do not expect that students will still be carrying out their research beyond the 3.5 year funded period. UKRI will not permit the use of RTSG after this period.

Contact Us

Contact us on any matter relating to ARIES, including any 'good news stories', or with feedback or suggestions for improvement (which we are always keen to have from students, supervisors, or any other stakeholder in the DTP):

Email: aries.dtp@uea.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)1603 593558

Twitter: @ARIES_DTP

Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/253659944804893/