

FACULTY OF NATURAL SCIENCES CENTRES & NETWORKS GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS

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1. Purpose

In parallel with the College process, a formal Faculty-wide process of endorsement and consistent branding of FoNS Networks and Centres has been created. This framework (see appendix) will apply to all new initiatives. Existing FoNS Centres and Networks are invited to register and FoNS encourages compliance with this framework – including its nomenclature. FoNS approved Networks or Centres will benefit from Faculty recognition and branding, including a formal presence in the Faculty website, marketing to prospective partners and funders and support from FoNS senior management and the Faculty Research Committee.

This is the first call for creating FoNS Networks and Centres. Future calls will be released annually each autumn.

2. How to apply

Applications must be made using the application form provided and submitted by the Centre Directors or Network Leaders to the Strategic Research Manager with Head of Department (or their delegate) approval. Applications will be reviewed and approved by the Faculty Research Committee.

3. Deadlines

Applications (completed application form and completed members list) should be submitted by the Centre Directors or Network Leaders by **26th October 2018** to s.armstrong-brown@imperial.ac.uk.

4. Review and Selection of FoNS Networks and Centres

The Faculty Research Committee will evaluate proposals in January 2019 according to the extent that they meet the requirements as described in the framework (see appendix). Outcomes will be communicated to the Department by the end of January 2019.

5. Reporting

Faculty will be required to write a short annual report to the Faculty Research Committee. FoNS Networks and Centres will need to meet the requirements described in the framework to ensure that they continue to be recognised.

Guidance on the creation of new FoNS Networks and Centres¹

The guidance below refers to FoNS only. Where other Faculties are involved, the application should be for a College Centre or Network. Over time, research Networks may develop into Centres

	FoNS Networks	FoNS Centres
Purpose	FoNS Networks are intended to establish and nurture connectivity and develop critical mass in strategically important areas. They should derive benefit from increased visibility across College and to external stakeholders.	FoNS Centres are intended to consolidate a critical mass of permanent academic staff and funding, across multiple research groups and Departments around a central research theme. They should derive benefit from increased visibility across College and to external stakeholders and consolidated funding should enhance their research impact.
Size	No minimum, though the intention for Networks is to be expansive (20 + researchers).	5-10 staff minimum, including postdocs and academics.
Number	There is no limit to the number of FoNS Networks that can be supported but they should be distinct in scope and membership.	There is no limit to the number of FoNS Networks that can be supported but they should be distinct in scope and membership.
Organisation	Will have a host Department from FoNS with members from different Departments.	Will have a host Department from FoNS with members from different Departments.
Leadership & Governance	Each Network must have a named leader and their Department will be the host Department. If there are joint leaders from different Departments, there will need to be an agreement concerning the host Department (with approval from the HoDs).	Each Centre must have a Director (or Co-Directors) who is a member of academic staff from the host Department. Will have a Management Board. May have an External Advisory Board. The Director should report progress to the Vice-Dean (Research) and Strategic Research Manager in FoNS.
Funding	No minimum	£0.5M p.a. minimum with allowed exceptions. Funding may be derived from several different sources and should be secured for at least two years.
Dissemination	Networks should have a web presence that includes information on current research themes and a list of contacts	Centre staff should be actively engaged in research and publish under the Centre's name, acknowledging both their Department and FoNS. A list of the Centre's publications should be included in the annual report submitted to the Strategic Research Manager. Centres should have an up-to-date web presence, including programme for both internal and external stakeholders, appropriate to its remit, and other activities designed to promote visibility.
Set-up	Approval is required from Head of Department (first) and FoNS Vice-Dean (Research) in consultation with the Faculty Research Committee.	Approval is required from Head of Department (first) and FoNS Vice-Dean (Research) in consultation with the Faculty Research Committee.

	Proposals for new FoNS Networks (and recognition of existing FoNS networks) should include a statement of the scope and objectives of the network as approved by the Head of the host Department. These should be submitted to the Faculty Research Committee who will check there is no conflict in scope with existing networks and that the proposal complies with the College's naming policy. The Vice-Dean (Research) will resolve any conflicts.	Proposals for new FoNS Centres (and recognition of existing FoNS Centres) should include a statement of the scope and objectives of the Centre as approved by the Head of the host Department. These should be submitted to the Faculty Research Committee who will check there is no conflict in scope with existing networks and that the proposal complies with the College's naming policy. The Vice-Dean (Research) will resolve any conflicts.
Review	Faculty Networks will be required to submit a short annual report to the Faculty Research Committee on activities undertaken and the levels of engagement achieved.	Faculty Centres will be required to submit a short annual report to the Faculty Research Committee on activities undertaken and the levels of engagement achieved. Centres should demonstrate high quality research supported by publications, research income and a thriving postgraduate community.
Close-down	Initiated by the Faculty Vice-Dean (Research) and the Head of the host Department.	Initiated by the Faculty Vice-dean (Research) and the Head of the host Department.