

United States and United Kingdom fund research on Thwaites Glacier, Antarctica

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The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the U.K.-based Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) are partnering to fund \$25 million in scientific research to study the Thwaites Glacier in West Antarctica. The research will attempt to shed light on the glacier's accelerated ice loss and how melting glaciers may impact future sea level rise.

The Thwaites Glacier is a marine-terminating glacier, which has been losing ice at double its normal rate for the last six years.

The partnership includes a joint program solicitation that will award continuing federal grants for scientific research on the Thwaites Glacier and Amundsen Sea Region. There will be an initial field research staging season from October 2018 through February 2019 and a specific research season to study the Thwaites Glacier from October 2019 through February 2020. An ad-hoc panel composed of NSF and NERC reviewers will assess the grant proposals.

NERC also announced a series of research objectives to be carried out with U.K. funding alone. These include airborne geophysical surveys and oceanographic monitoring of the Amundsen Sea, ice-sheet layer radar chronology of the Thwaites Glacier basin, ice-velocity mapping, and updating the U.K. Earth System Model (UKESM) that will study enhanced ice-ocean interactions.

Sources: National Science Foundation, United Kingdom Natural Environment Research Council
