



EPA Support for Climate Change Advisory Council Research Fellowships

Guide for Applicants

September 2020

EPA Support for Climate Change Advisory Council Research Fellowships: Guide for Applicants

This document provides general guidance for applicants for fellowships by the EPA for research in support of the Climate Change Advisory Council. For further information, please refer to the relevant Terms and Conditions document available on the Climate Change Advisory Council website <http://www.climatecouncil.ie>

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Section 1: Overview of the Application Process

Making an Application

Applications **must** be submitted to info@climatecouncil.ie

You will need to refer to the following documentation which is available to download from the Climate Change Advisory Council's website at <http://www.climatecouncil.ie>:

1. EPA Support for Climate Change Advisory Council Research Fellowships: Technical Description Document
2. EPA for and on behalf of Climate Change Advisory Council - Research Call: Terms & Conditions for Support of Grant Awards
3. EPA for and on behalf of Climate Change Advisory Council - Research Call: Application Form

Submission of Proposals

1. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the proposal is **approved by your organisation's research office/managing director and submitted before the deadline for submission of applications** (as noted in the Technical Description Documents).

Authorisation of Proposals

1. For an application to be valid it **must be authorised** (signed and stamped) by the relevant contact in your organisation (e.g. research office, managing director) and included in the application form and submitted to info@climatecouncil.ie by the indicated deadline in the Technical Description Document. The EPA has no responsibility to ensure your organisation submits appropriate authorisation.
2. If a physical stamp is not possible due to current working arrangements, **the authoriser MUST also be copied on the application email** when this is submitted to info@climatecouncil.ie.
3. Should any partners be identified on the application, they **MUST also be copied on the application email** submitted to info@climatecouncil.ie

DEADLINE DATES FOR APPLICATION

9th October 2020

Deadline for submission of applications

IMPORTANT:

1. Only proposals that have been fully authorised by your organisation and received before the **deadline for submission of applications** will be considered for evaluation.
2. Any partners identified in the proposal must also ensure that they are aware of privacy and use policies, and must also complete a declaration on the application form (Section A.5).
3. Proposals that exceed the maximum duration and/or request funding in excess of the maximum specified for the topic will be considered to be invalid and will not proceed to evaluation stage under any circumstances.

Evaluation Stage 1 – Scientific Review

1. Proposals will be screened by the EPA to check that they are complete and correspond to the requirements of the EPA Support for Climate Change Advisory Council Research Fellowships: Technical Description Document.
2. Proposals will be evaluated using predefined evaluation criteria.
3. Evaluators will be identified from panels of experts with a record of publication and/or relevant experience in specific subject areas.

The rating of each evaluation criterion is as follows:

Option	Score (% of Marks Available)	Description
Poor	<20%	The criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses
Fair	20% - 39%	The proposal broadly addresses the criterion but there are significant weaknesses
Good	40% - 59%	The proposal addressed the criterion well but with several shortcomings
Very Good	60% - 79%	The proposal addresses the criterion very well but with a small number of shortcomings

Excellent	80% - 100%	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion, any shortcomings are minor
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Thresholds

To proceed to the second stage of the evaluation process and be considered for funding, proposals must:

- Achieve a minimum average of 40% in each evaluation criterion (i.e. average across all individual evaluation forms)
- Achieve a minimum average total score of 700/1,000 marks (i.e. average based on the overall total score from all individual evaluation forms)

Evaluation Stage 2 – Final Project Selection

The final selection of project proposals will be made by the EPA with the assistance of a panel drawn from the Council and/or other suitably qualified persons. Selection will be made subject to the availability of funding and in accordance with the following general criteria:

- Relevance to Technical Description
- Value for Money
- Research Integrity
- Gender Equity
- Gender Dimension

This Stage of evaluation **may** also include interview of the Principal Researcher.

Notification of Outcome of Evaluation

All applicants will be notified in writing of the results of the evaluation process. The notification will include an Evaluation Summary Report, which contains summary comments from each member of the evaluation panel. Please note, the names of the individual evaluators will not be disclosed.

Successful applicants must be ready to start work on a date to be agreed with the EPA during the project negotiation phase. If project negotiations are unsuccessful a formal offer of funding will not be made.

IMPORTANT: Proposals will be evaluated and selected based on the details submitted at the time of application. Changes to details following the submission of a proposal (including changes of Principal Investigators and Organisations) will invalidate your application.

Appeals

All appeals must be submitted within 30 days of the date of notification of the outcome of the evaluation process. Appeals submitted outside of the 30-day period will not be considered.

The [Climate Change Advisory Council Appeals Policy and Procedure](#) is published on the Climate Change Advisory Council website.

Research Support Fellowship Grant Award

The award of research funding is restricted to Higher Education Institutions on the island of Ireland. Applications must be made by a suitably qualified and experienced researcher in conjunction with a host third level institution. All awarded research grants must be supervised by appropriate experts in the host University/Institute.

Section 2: Application Form

This section of the document offers guidance on how to complete the project description.

- For an application to be valid, you must complete both Part A and Part B of the application form
 - (a) all fields in the application form and
 - (b) all parts of the project description template
 - (c) all relevant sections of the budget template
- Do not exceed the max word count in relevant parts.
- Section A contains relevant information on the applicant, supervisor and host organisation, their gender and research integrity policies and a summary of project objectives and expected impacts.
- Section A.5 Declaration and Section A.6: Organisation authorisation must be completed by the appropriate persons and submitted by the applicant, copying in authoriser (and partner if required) by the application deadline.
- Do not exceed the max page count of 20 pages in Part B.
- Font size must be a **minimum of 10 pt** – if the application is too difficult to read, it may be invalidated.

Section title

B.1 - Literature Review: State of Knowledge; Policy and Solutions

Evaluated in two parts (1 and 2). This section could include, but is not limited to:

1 - Literature review: State of Knowledge

- Understanding of the issues and their impacts on the Irish climate and environment
- Relevant bibliography/references
- Review of current State of Knowledge (including previous feasibility studies, if relevant)

2 – Policy and Solutions: Relevance to the Climate Change Advisory Council

- The Climate Change Advisory Council aims to assess and advise how Ireland is making the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050.
 - **Inform policy:** Generate evidence, review practices and build models to inform policy development and implementation.
 - **Identifying solutions:** Technologies and methods that address climate challenges and identify opportunities.

Please provide details of how this research will help fulfil some or all of these aims and how it fits with national and international policies and research objectives.

A maximum of 20% of the overall marks are available under this criterion (10% for Part 1; 10% for Part 2).

The suggested maximum page count is 3.

Section title

B.2 Objectives targets and impacts, detailed work-packages, risk and contingencies

This section could include, but is not limited to:

- Demonstration of the scientific and technical quality, innovation and research content of the proposal
- Project statement
- Objectives and targets
- Outputs and impacts
- Risk and contingencies
- Detailed work packages (for projects), using work package template below
- Work description (for scholarships and fellowships)
- Gantt Charts, example provided below
- Please note that the Work Packages and Gantt Chart are to be *included* as part of the total maximum page count of your application.

A maximum of 30% of the overall marks are available under this criterion.

The suggested maximum page count is 10.

Work Package template

The definition of a project's scope requires comprehensive specification of its work breakdown structure. An essential element of this is the appropriate division of the project into manageable work packages.

When providing work package details, applicants must complete a copy of the Work Package template for each Work Package. The template is included in the Application Form available for download from the [Council website](#) (see example on the following page). Applicants should also complete the Work Package Summary template which is also available on the [Council website](#).

Work Package templates are included in the total maximum page count of your application.

Please note: work packages **must** be included for Project Management to account for the time to be spent on these activities.

Sample Work Package Template

Work Package Title:	<i>Please Add the title of the Work Package (WP) here</i>		
Work Package No.:	<i>Please add the number of the Work Package here e.g. WP1</i>		
Cost:	<i>Please add the total cost of the Work Package here</i>		
Start Month:	<i>Indicate the Start Month of this WP as dd/mm/yyyy here</i>	End Month:	<i>Indicate the End Month of this WP as dd/mm/yyyy here</i>
Work Package Leader Details:	Leader Name	Leader Organisation	Leader Person Months
	<i>Please add the First Name and Surname of the Work Package Leader here</i>	<i>Please add the Organisation Name of the Work Package Leader here</i>	<i>Please calculate the Person Months of the Work Package Leader and add this calculation here) e.g. 1: Assume there are 214 working days in the year. This person works on the WP one day per month. That is 12 days total. Divide 12 by 214 = 0.056 and then multiply 0.056 by 12 = 0.67 person months (person months should be rounded to 2 decimal places)</i>
Work Package Partner(s) Details if relevant:	No.	Partner Name	Partner Organisation
NOTE: Additional partners to fellowships are not expected.	1.	<i>Please add the First Name and Surname of the Work Package Partner 1 here</i>	<i>Please add the Organisation of the Work Package Partner 1 here</i>
		Please repeat rows as above depending on the number of Work Package Partners	Please repeat rows as above depending on the number of Work Package Partners
Objectives:	<i>Please clearly outline the key objectives of this Work Package</i>		

Description of Work:	<p>Description of Work (with sub-task titles where appropriate). Provide a detailed description of how listed targets will be met. To include, where applicable,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Methodology Quality control procedures The approach to site selection, sampling locations, data analysis <p>Procedures for formatting and exchange of data should be identified within the project, especially relevant with project partners</p>
Deliverables and Milestones:	Please provide details of the Key deliverables and milestones for this Work Package
Expected Outcomes:	Briefly outline the expected outcomes of this Work Package

Work Package Summary Table: Please use the following table to provide a summary of the contribution of each project participant under each work package (add rows as necessary). This table is filled in on the basis of each individual work package description

Summary of Work Package Project Participants and Person Months										
Project Participant Details				Work Packages Participant Person Months						
Name	Organisation	Role	Leader of WP(s)	WP1	WP2	WP3	WP4	WP5	WP6	Total Person Months

Sample GANTT CHART: Project Milestones and Timetable

Task	Description ↓ Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	Development of Methodology																								
1.1	Workshop on requirements		█	█	█	█	█	█																	
1.2	Development of methodology						█	█	█																
1.3	Evaluation of methodology								█																
2	Specification of systems																								
2.1	Inventory	█	█	█																					
2.2	Review		█	█	█																				
2.5	Impact analysis									█	█	█													
3	Feasibility study on future scenarios																								
3.1	Review subject	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
3.2	Review technologies																								
3.3	Prepare scenarios																								
4	Project Milestones, Management and Co-ordination																								
4.1	Interim milestones	█											█												█
4.2	Steering Committee meeting																							█	
4.3	Technical Progress Report (TPR)																								
4.4	Interim invoice	█											█											█	
5	Communication																								
5.1	Workshops			█							█						█								█
6	Deliverables from the project																								
6.1	Final Invoice																							Final	
6.2	Final Technical Report (TPR)																							Final	█

Section title

B.3: Academic background, work experience and training

Mandatory elements of this section:

1. Details of primary degree (awarding body, grade, date, list of subjects)
2. Details of post-graduate degree (degree(s), subjects, academic body awarding the post graduate degree(s)/qualifications, date(s) obtained and title and synopsis of thesis)
3. Details of research/work experience - including examples of research relevant to the designated research area for the fellowship
4. Description of communication skills – including examples of communication to a variety of audiences and use of different media e.g. presentations, newspaper articles, radio, internet
5. Description of organisational and team-working skills and other relevant work experience

A maximum of 20% of the overall marks are available under this criterion

The suggested maximum page count is 4

Section title B.4: Engagement and Communication

Engagement and Communication

The aim of the engagement and communication section is to ensure that knowledge generated by the project is communicated effectively, on a continuous basis, to appropriate audiences in the most appropriate format over the lifetime of the project.

Please note that all research grant awards funded by the EPA for the Climate Change Advisory Council are required to ensure open access via Green¹ methods.

Further details are available in the [Guidelines on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data in Horizon 2020](#) and [Open access to publications and data in Horizon 2020: Frequently Asked Questions](#). Please refer to Section E – What else do I need to know for further details.

All proposed engagement and communication activities should contain the following headings:

- Stakeholders
- Outputs

A budget may not be required for engagement and communication activities. Should a budget be required for activities outlined in the proposal, **no more than 5% of the total grant aid over the life of the project is to be allocated to these activities and be included in the budget template form.**

NOTE: Any agreed workshops required will be supported by the Climate Change Advisory Council Secretariat.

It is strongly recommended that the applicants familiarise themselves with and utilise the tools provided in the EPA Bridging the Gap Resource Kit:

- [EPA Research Report 131](#): BRIDGE: Tools for science-policy communication;
- [EPA Research Report 132](#): Good Practice Guide for science-policy communication; and
- [EPA Research Report 133](#): A Knowledge Transfer Guide for Researchers.

A maximum of 10% of the overall marks are available under this criterion

The suggested maximum page count is 1

¹ Self-archiving / 'green' open access – the author, or a representative, archives (deposits) the published article or the final peer-reviewed manuscript in an online repository before, at the same time as, or after publication. Some publishers request that open access be granted only after an embargo period has elapsed.

Engagement and Communication	
Applicants must complete a copy of this template.	
<p>Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale for engagement 	<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy makers Research community Steering committee Public EPA NGO's Business and Industry, Local Government
<p>Outputs</p>	<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Report Working Papers Briefing documents Peer Reviewed journal articles Models, Databases etc.

Section title **B.5: Project management and project team**

This section could include, but is not limited to:

Project Management:

- Organisation and management
- Allocation of work between partners, if relevant
- Co-ordination between partners, if relevant (internal and external)
- Roles and responsibilities of personnel involved
- Working with the EPA, Climate Change Advisory Council/ external bodies

Project Team:

- Qualifications of key researcher
- Suitability of expertise
- Recent research track record of the researcher (include details of published papers, citations etc. NOTE: Additional partners to fellowships are not expected, however please complete for each researcher/partner if required)
- Local knowledge and participation
- Role and relevant experience of each researcher (NOTE: Additional partners to fellowships are not expected, however please complete for each researcher/partner if required).
- Where new staff will be recruited the recruitment requirements and criteria should be specified

A maximum of 15% of the overall marks are available under this criterion

The suggested maximum page count is 2

Section title

B.6: Budget justification / Appropriateness of resource allocation

Applicants must provide justification to support the proposed costs included in the budget template. This may include but is not limited to the break down and justification of the following costs:

1. Personnel
2. Travel and Subsistence
3. Plant, Equipment and Consumables
4. External Assistance
5. Other Facilities
6. Communications (if required)

A maximum of 5% of the overall marks are available under this criterion

The suggested maximum page count is 1

Section title

B.7: Policy compliance

Insert a few lines stating your organisations compliance in relation to policies related to issues such as environment, ethics, equal treatment, research integrity etc. This should be limited to all one paragraph and will be used to inform the deliberative process of the review panel.

Section 3: Budget & Financial Eligibility Rules

Budget Template Completion

IMPORTANT: Proposals must not exceed the maximum budget specified for the research grant.

Grant Aid Rates & Eligible Costs

General Funding Principles

The EPA funds not-for-profit research (on a reimbursement basis) intended to generate knowledge for public good purposes. The term 'Grantee' is defined in the Notification of Award of Research Grant and includes the lead organisation, the principal investigator (PI) and project participants there defined. It means each of them separately and all of them together or any number of them collectively.

Eligible costs are the costs defined as direct or indirect costs. In general, Direct Costs must fulfil the following conditions:

- be actual,
- be reasonable and wholly necessary for the project,
- be incurred and paid during the lifetime of the project,
- be incurred solely to advance the research project or if any single item shall benefit both the research project and other work then such costs shall be eligible only in the proportion that such costs bear to the proportionate benefit derived from them by the research project,
- be determined in accordance with the usual accounting principles, based on historic costs, and the usual internal rules of the Grantee, provided that they are regarded as being acceptable by the EPA,
- be recorded in the accounts of the grantee, which must be maintained for the duration of the project (and beyond) and reported to the EPA on a six-monthly basis,
- exclude any profit margin,
- not be otherwise reasonably available and accessible to the grantee,
- be of the type normally charged as a direct cost to funded research projects.

Non-eligible costs are in particular the following:

- any interest, or return on capital employed,
- provisions for possible future obligations, losses or charges
- sick pay, redundancy payments, and other social costs
- interest owed,
- provisions for doubtful debts,
- resources made available to a Grantee free of charge,
- unnecessary, ill-considered or unsubstantiated expenditure,
- marketing, sales and distribution costs for products & services,

- entertainment or hospitality expenses except such reasonable expenses accepted as wholly and exclusively necessary for carrying out the work under the Agreement.
- Car tax and insurance
- Maintenance and repair costs
- Miscellaneous expenses
- Subscriptions (unless it can be demonstrated that they are wholly and exclusively necessary for the work to be performed under the Research Project).
- All costs associated with the recruitment of staff
- Bonus payments or other perquisites paid to staff whether in cash or in-kind

Grantees may be eligible to transfer between themselves or between cost headings budgeted amounts, provided that:

- the amounts to be transferred are eligible costs and not considered excessive by the EPA,

and

- the lead participant seeks the written approval from the EPA in advance of such a transfer and confirms that the scope of the project and the conditions of participation referred to in the particular Application Form and Grant Agreement are not fundamentally altered.

The general principle is that funding is provided for some or all of the cost of carrying out the research. In general, the level of funding will be up to a maximum of 100% where all of the costs incurred are deemed eligible.

Personnel

- Salary costs associated with new or existing staff within an organisation working on a funded research project are eligible.
- Person-day costs are limited to the actual salary cost including employers PRSI and statutory **employer** pension contributions (where relevant) paid in accordance with The Employment Control Framework (ECF) for the Higher Education Sector (where relevant). This rate must be specified in the budget.

Please note: employers pension contributions will only be eligible for payment when relevant documentation is provided, to the financial consultants contracted by the EPA to provide financial management expertise and support to the EPA, supporting that these contributions are paid or provided for in accordance with the internal accounting policies of the University or College and in addition are operated in accordance with the requirements of the ECF. For relevant participants within the Higher Education Sector involved in projects awarded on or after the 10th March 2011, the provisions of the Employment Control Framework for the Higher Education Sector 2011-2014 must be observed for all staff who are members of a public service pension scheme, to address the matter of deferred liabilities arising from their public service pension entitlements. Where staff appointments within the Higher Education Sector are funded from existing public finances then claims for funding in respect of pension obligations are not permitted.

- Staff members who are funded from non-core sources and who are not considered members of the Education Sector Superannuation Scheme (ESSS) are by definition, not public servants as they are not members of the ESSS nor are they eligible to join the relevant public service pension scheme. As a result, **employer** pension contributions for such appointments should not be sought under Section 4 of the ECF. In such circumstances employer pension contributions will be considered eligible when relevant documentation is provided supporting the payment of these contributions to an appropriate pension scheme in the name of the individual concerned and it can be clearly demonstrated that the contributions made on behalf of the employee are in accordance with the organisations usual pension practices and policies.
- Where applicants are uncertain at the time of submitting an application as to the exact identity of personnel involved in the project then rates may be used based on staff categories or grades.
- The maximum salary levels funded under this research grant award are those laid down in the prevailing IUA salary guidelines for the appropriate staff grade.
- Where IUA salary guidelines are not observed by an applicant/participant, they must identify the relevant equivalent grade for each staff member on the IUA pay-scale.
- The rate and grade of each eligible staff member participating in the project must be specified and verifiable.
- Where an application is successful, and staff are paid in excess of the relevant point on the IUA pay scale then the claim for reimbursement must be adjusted to the applicable rate as per the IUA pay scale.
- Costs for remuneration of salary should be taken from the payroll records of the participant and should reflect the total gross remuneration plus the **employers'** portion of PRSI and **employers** pension contributions (where relevant). Remuneration costs must be calculated individually for each staff member and the use of average salary or pay scale levels (other than as indicated above) is not permitted.
- All participants can charge to the project the salary costs of administrative and supervisory personnel in charge of the supervision, administration and financial coordination of the project, not included in indirect costs.
- With regard to personnel costs, only the costs of the actual hours worked by the persons directly carrying out work under the project may be charged. All personnel who are employed for less than 100% of their time on the specific research project will be required to submit detailed timesheets signed by the employee and approved by their direct line manager or supervisor.
- For staff dedicating 100% of their working time to the project, a time declaration must be submitted, duly signed by the employee and approved by their direct line manager or supervisor.
- Such personnel must:
 - Be directly hired by the participant in accordance with its national legislation
 - Work under the sole technical supervision and responsibility of the participant, and
 - Be remunerated in accordance with the normal practices of the participant

- Participants will be required to provide information and documentation to support all salary costs claimed in respect of a project funded by the EPA. Such information includes but is not limited to, copy employee payslips, internal payroll records/reports, staff contracts of employment and relevant returns submitted to the Revenue Commissioners on behalf of employees involved in the project.
- The EPA will consider the provision of additional funding (in respect of the relevant statutory leave period) in circumstances over the course of the project where a member of the research team exclusively funded by the EPA makes an application for maternity, adoptive or paternity leave. Each application will be considered on a case by case basis and is subject to additional funding being available through the EPA. For post-doctoral researchers and salaried staff who meet the relevant PRSI eligibility criteria the maximum additional funding will represent the difference between the applicant's social welfare entitlement and their salary as stipulated in the award and their contract of employment. For post-doctoral researchers and salaried staff who do not meet the relevant PRSI eligibility criteria the maximum additional funding available will be equivalent to the salary stipulated for the post-doctoral researcher or employee in the award and their contract of employment. For further details please refer to the [EPA Research Policy on Maternity, Paternity and Adoptive Leave](#).

IMPORTANT: Applicants must obtain the prior consent of all employees and students engaged to work on such projects to release payroll and contract information pertaining to their employment which may be requested, by the financial consultants contracted by the EPA, from time to time.

Plant, Equipment and Consumables

The purchase and leasing of durable equipment, when acquired based on best price and in compliance with National and European Public Procurement Guidelines, may be considered an eligible cost as detailed below:

Purchase of Consumables

Where it is the usual practice of the Grantee to consider small incidental items of equipment as non-capital expenditure, those costs can be claimed in full but must be included in the consumable costs category.

Consumables usually relate to the purchase, fabrication, repair or use of any materials, goods or equipment and software which:

- Are not placed in the inventory of durable equipment of the participant
- Are not treated as capital expenditure in accordance with the accounting conventions and policies of the participant
- Have a short life expectancy, certainly not greater than the duration of the project.

All consumables and material costs directly related to the delivery of the project are deemed to be eligible.

Consumable or material costs must be separately identifiable and necessary for the project. Where it is the usual practice of the Grantee to consider consumable costs as indirect costs, those costs therefore cannot be charged as direct eligible costs of the project. Any exceptions to the above must be clearly documented and a case made to justify expenditure outside the general rule. Such cases must be submitted to the EPA for prior approval before any commitments can be made to fund such expenditure.

Off the shelf software and personal computing equipment (including laptops) cumulatively costing less than €10,000 are considered to be consumable items and are fully reimbursable.

Costs of small incidental equipment treated in the Grantee's financial records as consumable can be claimed in full. Such qualifying equipment costs should be included under the heading "Consumables" in all Financial Reports related to the project.

Costs which are internal to the Grantee are only eligible where it can be clearly demonstrated that the costs represent the real cost to the organisation. For such costs to be eligible a **justification for and the basis of calculation to support the actual costs of these charges** will be required. Where the internal costs contain any element of staff time, the relevant payroll records to support the salary costs and timesheet outlining the time spent providing the services will be required for each staff member.

Purchase of Plant and Equipment

This grant award is not intended to be a source of capital funding and Grantees should endeavour to ensure that the principle items of equipment required for the effective implementation of the project are already available

The costs associated with new plant and equipment purchased exclusively and necessarily for the purpose of the project, and not previously available to the host institute, will be considered to be eligible in full if the cost involved represents no more than €50,000 (exclusive of VAT).

For significant pieces of equipment, with a value greater than €50,000 (exclusive of VAT), the cost will be depreciated on a pro rata basis (see depreciation calculation below) as the purchase of such equipment is likely to represent a significant asset to the Grantee following the completion of the project.

Purchase of all equipment must be justified, whether it is deemed to be a significant asset or not, and each proposed acquisition will be assessed by the EPA as part of our review of applications for funding. The EPA's decision on these matters will be final.

If guidance is required on the purchase of plant and equipment, including depreciation, please contact info@climatecouncil.ie.

Travel and Subsistence

Actual travel and related subsistence costs (including those based on approved mileage and subsistence rates) for personnel working on the project are fully reimbursable and may be charged to the project, provided that the costs comply with the participants normal practices in this regard. Where such costs are incurred they must be reasonable, separately identifiable, limited to the actual cost and should be a specific requirement for the implementation of the funded initiative. The prior approval of the EPA shall only be required for travel to any destination outside the UK and EU.

Where travel costs are incurred by employees involved in the project and such costs are reimbursed by the participant on a per diem basis then it is the per diem payment that is considered to be the eligible cost. All lump sum or per diem payments in this regard must be in keeping with the normal practices of the participant and must not exceed current civil service subsistence rates.

Travel and subsistence costs relating to personnel not included in the staff costs category or not named in the Budget proposal will require approval of the EPA.

Where individuals are reimbursed for use of their private vehicle for business travel by way of mileage then the vehicle details, relevant rate per mile, destination, number of miles travelled and purpose of journey must be clearly stated and the necessity for such travel demonstrated to the EPA. In all cases, such rates must not exceed the current civil service or other Revenue Commissioners approved rates and must be recorded and claimed in accordance with the participant's normal practices.

Where researchers outside the State are required by the project coordinator to attend project meetings in Ireland, their costs will be deemed eligible and will not require prior approval. The eligibility of such travel will be contingent upon adequate budget being available, based on the applicant's original submission, and appropriate justification being provided by the relevant participant. Failure to do so may result in all costs relating to travel from outside of the country being disallowed.

Travel and subsistence costs should not constitute more than 10% of the total budgeted expenditure of the research project, unless a higher percentage is justified in the relevant technical description

Other Facilities

Other specific actual costs, which do not fall into any of the categories of eligible costs above, should be included in this category. Such costs may only be claimed subject to prior written approval of the EPA unless they are already provided for in the Grant Agreement.

External Assistance

In general participants should endeavour to ensure that they have the necessary skills within the project team to carry out the work to be performed as part of their proposal. However, the EPA recognises that in all cases this may not be possible particularly where the resources required are specialist in nature and it may therefore be necessary to obtain external assistance in the form of sub-contract or consultancy arrangements for certain aspects of a project subject to the provision of a clear explanation as to why the project team could not have provided these skills.

A sub-contract or consultancy arrangement is an agreement to provide services relating to tasks required for the project, which cannot be carried out by the participant itself, concluded between a participant and one or more contractors or consultants for the specific needs of the project. As sub-contracting and consultancy arrangements invariably relate to the production of a service, it should be clear in all consulting or sub-contracting arrangements that any intellectual property arising from such work remains the property of the participant and must be at the entire disposal of the participant.

All such sub-contracts or consultancy arrangements, the costs of which are to be claimed as an eligible cost, must be awarded to the bid offering the best value for money (when comparing best price to quality ratio), under conditions of transparency and equality. Any sub-contract or consultancy arrangement must be offered to the most economically advantageous tender in compliance with applicable National and European Public Procurement Guidelines. Copies of relevant invoices, certified by the grantees concerned, should be attached to the corresponding cost statements.

Sub-contract and consultancy arrangements may relate only to a limited part of the project and should only be carried out by third parties not connected with the project. Where the services of a sub-contractor or consultant are required, as part of an application for funding, these should not constitute more than 20% of the total budgeted expenditure of each individual participant and the project overall. Sub-contract and consultancy arrangements are also subject to a maximum daily rate for external assistance of €600 + VAT. Sub-contract arrangements between participants are not permitted.

Core elements of any project funded by the EPA may not be sub- contracted.

Communication

A budget may not be required for engagement and communication activities. Should a budget be required for activities outlined in the proposal, no more than 5% of the total grant aid over the life of the project is to be allocated to these activities. Any agreed workshops required will be supported by the Climate Change Advisory Council Secretariat and therefore do not require budget allocation in the application.

5% of the total grant aid approved for each individual participant and the project overall. All budget templates include a separate category for these costs which do not attract overheads.

VAT (Value Added Tax)

Where a participant organisation is registered for Value Added Tax (VAT) and able to reclaim any VAT they incur on their costs then all expenditure items included in their application for funding and subsequent claims for reimbursement should be shown at the VAT exclusive amount. Where an organisation is not entitled to reclaim the VAT that they incur in relation to their costs then the amounts included in their application for funding and subsequent

claims for reimbursement should be the VAT inclusive amount. Applicants will be required to specify their VAT status in their Application for funding.

Indirect costs / Overheads

In general, a contribution to overheads of up to 30% of modified costs is allowed for research projects. .

Modified costs are defined as all eligible costs excluding durable equipment, external assistance and communication costs.

In regard to research fellowship awards modified overhead rates are applied as outlined in the table below:

Project Type	Research Fellowships		
Days per working week at Host Institution	0-1	2-3	4-5
Applicable overhead rate	10%	20%	30%

Overheads will not be funded by EPA as part of Scholarship awards.

Section 4: What Else do I Need to Know?

Grant Award

Subject to satisfactory negotiation, lead organisations and participants will be awarded a research grant in respect of the agreed project. An initial advance payment of up to 50% will be made within two months of the notification of the grant award being issued. All subsequent payments will be made on a reimbursement basis following the submission and certification of financial cost statements and approval of technical progress reports.

Open Access of Publications and Data

Open Access

All research grant awards funded by the EPA for the Climate Change Advisory Council are required to ensure open access via Green² methods.

Further details are available in the [Guidelines on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Research Data in Horizon 2020](#) and [Open access to publications and data in Horizon 2020: Frequently Asked Questions](#).

² Self-archiving / 'green' open access – the author, or a representative, archives (deposits) the published article or the final peer-reviewed manuscript in an online repository before, at the same time as, or after publication. Some publishers request that open access be granted only after an embargo period has elapsed.

Open Data

It is also a requirement for all funded projects that the research data needed to validate the results presented in their scientific publications is deposited via the [EPA Research Data Archive \(SAFER\)](#), or another data repository as agreed with the EPA.

Data and information resources generated by projects are part of a very wide spectrum of outputs which includes, but is not limited to: quantitative and qualitative datasets, databases, GIS layers, geographical data, geographic imagery, project presentations, posters, abstracts, surveys and questionnaires, photographs, audio or visual recordings, software code and software libraries, mobile and smartphone applications, computer models and simulations, pre-prints of PhD and M.Sc. theses, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), etc.

Each project funded by the EPA is expected to deposit data and information resources on SAFER or another data repository as agreed with the EPA. This will vary from project to project. Every project should engage in discussions with the EPA from an early stage in their funding to agree what data and information resources will be archived and subsequently disseminated as open data. Data and information resources must be generated by the project itself. Consequently, this requirement does not include the deposition of data and information resources such as Ordnance Survey mapping and imagery or other commercially obtained resources.

Bibliographic Metadata

Additionally, Grantees must ensure open access, through the SAFER or another data repository as agreed with the EPA, to the bibliographic metadata that identify the deposited publication, and which must include:

- i. The terms "Environmental Protection Agency", "Climate Change Advisory Council" and "Climate Change Ireland";
- ii. The publication date, and length of embargo period (in the case of green open access), and
- iii. A persistent identifier (e.g. the grant number, Digital Object Identifier (DOI), ISBN etc)

We recommend that authors retain their copyright and grant adequate licenses to publishers.

Intellectual Property

The EPA funds not-for-profit research intended to generate knowledge for public good purposes and as such EPA expects that outputs / findings should be widely disseminated and made publicly available. The [EPA Research Data Archive \(SAFER\)](#) or another data repository as agreed by the EPA should be used for this purpose.

On completion of a research project, Principal Investigators are granted 12 months of exclusive access to the datasets uploaded to SAFER which they have collected to prepare material for publication in scientific journals.

Where there is a reasonable potential for commercial exploitation of research outputs, the EPA applies the principles of the document [Ireland's National IP Protocol 2019](#) to ensure that knowledge arising from its funded research is translated for public benefit.

Research Integrity

The EPA places great importance on ensuring that all aspects of the research which it funds is conducted to the highest standards of research integrity. The EPA fully endorses the [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#) and the [European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) and expects that all Research Performing Organisations and EPA award holders abide by the guidelines included therein. The EPA expressly encourages that EPA award holders, and associated project teams, undertake relevant research integrity training on a regular basis.

Freedom of Information Act

The EPA and/or the Climate Change Advisory Council may be obliged to disclose information relating to the project under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and / or the European Communities (Access to Information on the Environment) Regulations 2007 to 2014. Where the researcher submits any information to the EPA and/or the Climate Change Advisory Council which they consider to be confidential, they must identify this information at the time it is submitted and explain why they consider the information to be confidential. The EPA will take account of the researcher's request and will endeavour to give effect to it if it considers it to be reasonable; but it cannot guarantee that it will not be obliged to disclose any such information; and the researcher acknowledges this.

Data Protection

Personal information supplied to the EPA will be stored in electronic and structured manual data formats e.g., hard copy folder or database, for use only in connection with this application and the administration of the research grant award and publication of results. The provisions of Data Protection Legislation shall be complied with by the EPA and the Grantees with respect to the processing of personal data.

Data Protection Legislation shall mean the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018 and Directive 95/46/EC, any other applicable law or regulation relating to the processing of personal data and privacy (including the E-Privacy Directive and the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011, as such legislation shall be amended, revised or replaced from time to time, including by operation of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679) (**GDPR**) (and laws implementing or supplementing the GDPR and/or the E-Privacy Regulations).

The provisions of the applicable Terms and Conditions with respect to data protection, and the terms of the EPA Privacy Policy, shall apply to the processing of personal data in connection with the research grant award.

Ethical & Gender Issues

If there are ethical or gender issues associated with the subject of a proposal, the applicant must demonstrate that they have been adequately taken into account, indicate which national and international regulations are applicable and explain how they will be respected.

Gender Issues

The principles of the EU gender mainstreaming policy apply to the programme. To this end participants shall be required to report the ratio of males to females working on projects.

Applicants are asked to take action to encourage females to take a lead role in research projects and to demonstrate that they have given full consideration to any potential gender dimension in their proposed research. Applicants may be asked to give evidence of action taken to promote and increase the numbers of females working in projects funded by the EPA.

The EPA is committed to ensuring there is appropriate gender balance at all levels of personnel engaged in the research it funds. Applicants will be asked to describe how gender balance will be fostered within their proposed research teams. To this end, applicants are encouraged to have balanced membership of each gender in the proposed project team and to ensure there is balanced participation across the proposed research activities. As stated in the [EPA Research Programme Gender Strategy](#), to fulfil the necessary funding eligibility requirements, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Technological Universities (TUs) must be committed to attaining the relevant Athena Swan³ Institutional award by the required timeframe.

Applicants are also requested to demonstrate that they have given full consideration to any potential gender dimension⁴ in the proposed research content.

Ethical Issues - Policy Concerning Research on Human Participants and Materials

Where ethical approval is required for research to be undertaken as part of an EPA-funded award, written evidence of ethical approval from the relevant national or local ethics committee must be provided to the EPA in advance of that aspect of the research commencing. Funding for the project will be withheld until written confirmation of ethical approval is received and acknowledged by the EPA. Where ethical approval is required for research to be undertaken as part of an EPA-funded award from the beginning of that award, evidence of ethical approval will be required before funding can be awarded by the EPA.

Further Information

Any enquiries related to the above should be addressed to info@climatecouncil.ie

³ <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-ireland/>

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/gender_en.htm