



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil



**Science, Technology, Research & Innovation for the
Environment (STRIVE) Programme 2007 – 2013**

**EPA STRIVE & Climate Change Research Programmes
GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS**

EPA Call for Research Proposals

Last Updated: 05th May 2011

**The EPA STRIVE Programme is funded by the Irish Government
under the National Development Plan 2007-2013**

This document provides general guidance for applicants under EPA call for proposals as part of the Science, Technology, Research & Innovation for the Environment (STRIVE) Programme 2007-2013. For further information, please refer to the relevant *Terms & Conditions* document available on the EPA website (www.epa.ie).

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1. Introduction

Since 1994, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) research programme has supported R&D activities in a range of environmental areas. This work was carried out by researchers in third level institutions, state agencies, government departments, local and regional authorities, the private sector and individuals. During the National Development Plan (NDP) 2000-2006, the EPA provided €39m to support environmental research. This was administered through the Environmental Research, Technological Development and Innovation (ERTDI) Programme.

The EPA research programme for the period 2007-2013 is entitled Science, Technology, Research and Innovation for the Environment (STRIVE) and is based on the following:

- the Environmental Research Sub-programmes of the *National Development Plan 2007-2013*;
- the Government's *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation* launched in 2006;
- the EPA's most recent assessments of Ireland's environment;
- the EPA's strategy *2020 Vision – Protecting and Improving Ireland's Environment*;
- a series of workshops organised by the Agency, mainly during 2006, involving environmental policymakers, managers and researchers;
- the experience gained in previous EPA research programmes.

It also takes account of developments at EU level in respect of current environment and research programmes and of the wider international context.

The purpose of the Programme is:

To protect and improve the natural environment by addressing key environmental management issues through the provision of world-class scientific knowledge generated through a vibrant, competitive programme of research developed supported and co-ordinated by EPA.

The aims of the programme are to:

- Contribute to a better environment by delivering applicable and relevant Science, Technology, Research and Innovation data, information and knowledge, based on high quality science and technology,
- Develop new techniques, methods and systems for measuring, recording and predicting the quality of the environment,
- Identify practical methods for the integration of environmental considerations into policies and programmes of the main economic sectors,
- Provide knowledge to support the mainstreaming of environment in the NDP,
- Collaborate with and assist other Agencies in their environmental decision making by providing high-quality, relevant, responsive and timely scientific information and research results,
- Develop and integrate the environmental component of the knowledge economy, and ensure that environment is a key issue for research priorities at National Level,
- Ensure that emerging EU and National Environmental and Research plans, policies and legislation are supported and implemented within the research programme,
- Disseminate the findings of the individual research projects and the overall programme to the widest possible audience in a coherent and timely manner.

The funding for the programme is provided from a number of sources:

- €93 million provided in the Environmental Research Sub-programme of the NDP 2007-2013;
- €8 million provided for research in aspects of climate change, transboundary pollution and earth observation under the Inter Departmental Committee for the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (IDC-SSTI);
- Co-funding with other state agencies and funding groups for projects / themes where such an arrangement would deliver synergies and increase the utilisation of results
- EPA core funding for staffing the management of the programme.

Other sources of funding for environmental research under the programme will continue to be developed as appropriate.

The STRIVE Programme consists of three key measures, two measures in support of these and seven principal thematic areas. Brief details of these are provided below:

Key Measures:

Measure 1: **Sustainable Development**

Measure 2: **Environmental Technologies and Cleaner Production**

Measure 3: **A Healthy Environment**

Support Measures:

Measure 4: **EPA Environmental Research Centre**

Measure 5: **Capacity and Capability Building**

Principal Thematic areas:

- **Air Quality, Atmospheric Deposition and Noise**
- **Sectoral impacts on Biodiversity**
- **Climate Change**
- **Soils and Landscape**
- **Socio-Economics**
- **Waste, Resource Management and Chemicals**
- **Water Quality and the Aquatic Environment**

The different types of projects funded through the programme are shown below:

Project-based Awards...

<i>Project Type</i>	<i>Typical Funding</i>	<i>Typical Duration</i>
Desk studies	<i>Up to €100,000</i>	<i>6 – 12 months</i>
Medium Scale studies	<i>up to €350,000</i>	<i>24 – 36 months</i>
Large Scale studies	<i>up to €1,000,000</i>	<i>36 – 48 months</i>
Capability Development projects	<i>in excess of €1,000,000</i>	<i>48 – 60 months</i>

and Researcher-based Awards...

<i>Project Type</i>	<i>Typical Funding</i>	<i>Typical Duration</i>
Masters scholarships	<i>Up to €40,000</i>	<i>~24 months</i>
Doctoral scholarships	<i>up to €90,000</i>	<i>~36 months</i>
Research fellowships	<i>up to €350,000</i>	<i>36 months</i>

Proposals received in response to a call are evaluated by experts from within and outside Ireland and awards are made based on their recommendations with regard to national environmental priorities and the need to maintain a balance of support across research topics. A general description of relevant research areas and project types for each call for proposals is outlined in the associated **Technical Description** document.

2. Application Procedure

The EPA provides funding to support science, technology, research and innovation projects through grant-aid to third level institutions, state agencies, government departments, local and regional authorities, the private sector and individuals. Proposals should contain an appropriate mix of expertise and knowledge as well as significant local and regional participation. Proposals are invited periodically through calls advertised in the national press and on the EPA website (www.epa.ie).

Applications for proposals should be prepared with reference to the relevant **Technical Description** document which is available on the EPA website. Terms and Conditions for support of Grant Awards and Guide for Applicants are available on the EPA website (www.epa.ie).

Application must be made using the EPA Grant Application & Project Management Portal available at: <http://epa.smartsimple.ie>.

Applicant must be a registered user to use the EPA Grant Application & Project Management Portal. To register the Registration Form available at http://epa.smartsimple.ie/files/347278/f92681/grant_applicant_registration.html should be completed.

The application is a **two-step process**:

1. **Submission of proposals** by applicants (before the Call Deadline) for authorisation by Research Offices / Managing Directors for companies;
2. **Authorisation of Proposals** by Research Offices / Managing Directors for companies (before the Organisation Approval Deadline).

Proposals MUST be authorised to be VALID

It is the responsibility of the Applicants to ensure that the proposals are submitted before the Call Deadline, and of the relevant Grant Authoriser (i.e. Research Offices / Managing Directors for companies) to ensure that the proposals are authorised before the Organisation Approval Deadline.

Authorisation process:

Once submitted, proposals **MUST** be authorised by the relevant person in the applicants organisation (i.e. Research Office; Managing director, etc.). Authorisation **MUST** be done before the Organisation Approval Deadline.

Who is the Grant Authoriser?

- Research Offices for universities, ITs, etc.
- Managing Directors or appropriate designated staff for companies (this cannot be the Applicant)

The Grant Authoriser can:

- Authorise a submission – The proposal is then VALID – No further action is required.
- Decline a submission – The proposal will NOT be processed.
- Ask for revisions – The proposal will only be valid if revised & authorised before the Organisation Approval Deadline.

Only authorised proposals can be sent for evaluation.

3. Procedure & Criteria for Assessment of Proposals

Only completed proposals received on or before the closing date specified in the advertisement will be considered for evaluation. Proposals will be screened by the EPA to check that they are complete and respond to the Technical Description document.

Proposals will be evaluated using a standard evaluation procedure using the criteria set out below. Evaluators will be identified from panels of experts with a record of publication and/or relevant experience in specific subject areas. Applications will be assessed in terms of the following general criteria:

Project-based awards...

Criteria	Marks
Scientific and technical quality, innovation and research content of the proposal	30%
Justification for the research in relation to national and International research objectives	15%
Familiarity with relevant issues and current related R&D:	15%
- Understanding of the issues and their impacts on the Irish environment	
- Relevant bibliography/references.	
- Review of current state of knowledge including previous feasibility studies.	
Experience and capability of the R&D team:	15%
- Qualifications of key researchers.	
- Suitability of expertise.	
- Participation in previous R & D.	
- Track record (include details of published papers, citations etc)	
- Local knowledge and participation.	
- Criteria for selection of contract personnel	
Management of the project:	15%
- Organisation and management.	
- Allocation of work between partners.	
- Co-ordination between partners.	
- Legal status of applicants.	
Costing and value for money:	10%
- Total cost in relation to work to be done and expected outputs	
- Eligibility and detail of costings.	
- Balance of cost allocation (i.e. between items and groups).	

Researcher-based awards...

Doctoral & Masters Scholarships

Criteria	Marks
Project Background, Relevance to Subject Area & Current State of Knowledge	20%
Description of Work	30%
Research Impact	20%
Project Management	10%
Academic Suitability & Training	20%

Research Fellowships

Criteria	Marks
Suitability of qualifications	15%
Details and relevance of research / work experience	30%
Description of Work	30%
Project Management (incl. role of supervisors)	10%
Costing and value for money	10%
Overall quality of the proposal	5%

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 and indicate which national and international regulations are applicable and explain how they will be respected.

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. Applicants may be asked to give evidence of action taken to promote and increase the numbers of females working in STRIVE projects.

4. Selection of Projects

The final selection of project proposals will be made by the EPA with the assistance of an National Advisory Panel (drawn from relevant government departments and agencies) according to the following general criteria:

- Relevance to national environmental priorities including Relevance to Call Technical Description (i.e. projects objectives, deliverables and management (e.g. project type)),
- Balance of support across research topics,
- Capacity Development of Irish research community in key areas including Novelty/Innovation of research (to avoid duplication with other research projects),
- Available level of funding, and
- Performance on previous EPA funded projects (where applicable), including on reporting requirements.

All applicants will be notified in writing of the results of the evaluation. Successful applicants must be ready to start work on a date to be agreed with the EPA during project negotiation. If project negotiations are unsuccessful the offer of funding may be cancelled. In the event that work does not begin within one month of the agreed start date, the project may be cancelled and the advance payment must be refunded to the EPA.

5. Grant Aid Rates & Eligible Costs

General Funding Principles

The STRIVE programme funds not-for-profit research (on a reimbursement basis) intended to generate knowledge for public good purposes. For the purpose of this document the 'Grantee' refers to all of the participants in the project team.

Eligible costs are the costs defined as **direct** or **indirect costs** as detailed below. They shall fulfil the following conditions:

- they must be actual,
- they must be reasonable and wholly necessary for the project,
- they must be incurred during the lifetime of the project,
- they must 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,
- they must be determined in accordance with the 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,
- they must be recorded in the accounts, which will be maintained throughout the duration of the project and reported on a six monthly basis,
- they must exclude any profit margin,
- they must not be otherwise reasonably available and accessible,
- 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 losses or charges (including social costs)
- interest owed,
- provisions for doubtful debts,
- resources made available to a Grantee free of charge,
- unnecessary or ill-considered expenses,
- 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.

Grantees shall be authorised to transfer between themselves or between cost headings budgeted amounts, provided that:

- the amounts to be transferred are 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 Agreement¹ are not fundamentally altered.

¹ The grant agreement is defined as the notification of grant award, the original proposal (including project budget) and any agreed amendments as well as the acknowledgement of receipt of grant award

The general principle is that funding is provided for some or all of the cost of carrying out the research. The level of funding will vary between 50% and 100% depending on the nature of the organisation undertaking the project (see table 1 below) and all of the costs incurred being eligible. Applicants must state which type of organisation category and the level of grant aid sought (as shown in Table 1) in the budget details section of their application.

Table 1

	Third-level ² Institutions	Other Public bodies ³	Private Organisations	
			SME ⁴	Non SME
Direct Costs	100%	75%	75%	50%

Indirect costs (overheads) are 30% of eligible modified costs. Modified costs are defined as all eligible costs excluding durable equipment and external assistance.

Personnel

Additionality is no longer applied in this programme and therefore costs associated with existing staff within an organisation working on a project are eligible. Person-day costs are limited to the actual salary cost including employers PRSI and statutory pension contributions made on behalf of the employee into a defined pension scheme. This rate must be specified in the budget. It should be noted that employers pension contributions will only be eligible for payment when relevant documentation is provided, to the financial consultants contracted to the EPA to provide financial management expertise and support to the STRIVE Programme, supporting the payment of these contributions to an appropriate pension scheme. Pension contributions must be discrete payments made by the employer organisation to the appropriate fund on behalf of the individual employee. Pension contributions or allowances, which are consolidated into gross salary, are not permitted.

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 for categories of staff, where staff are paid on specified salary grades or scales. This rate must be verifiable and where an application is successful, must be adjusted to the actual rate of pay for each individual at the time of submitting a claim for reimbursement of expenditure

Costs for remuneration of salary should be taken from the payroll records of the participant and should reflect the total gross remuneration plus the employer's portion of PRSI and pension contributions. 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 the 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 on a specific STRIVE project will be required to submit timesheets. Such personnel must:

² A third-level institution must be within the meaning of Section 1 of the Higher Education Act, 1971

³ Please see Appendix 1 for definition of Public body

⁴ Please see Appendix 2 for definition of SME

- Be directly hired by the participant in accordance with its national legislation
- Work under the sole technical supervision and responsibility of the latter, and
- Be remunerated in accordance with the normal practices of the participant

Salary costs are deemed to be the gross salary of eligible staff members together with the grantee's contribution to their pension and PRSI costs.

Plant, Equipment and Consumables

The purchase and leasing of durable equipment, when acquired based on best price and in compliance with Public Procurement Guidelines, may be considered to be 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 related to the project are deemed to be eligible. **Off the shelf software and personal computing equipment (including laptops) costing less than €10,000 are considered to be consumable items and are fully reimbursable. Please see example 1 below.**

Consumable or material costs must be separately identifiable and necessary for the project. Where it is the usual practice of the contractor 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 on expenditure.

– Purchase of Plant and Equipment

With the exception of Sub Measure 5.2 "Support for Instrumentation and related Infrastructure", the STRIVE Programme⁵ 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 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) - **Please see example 2 (a) below.**

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. **Please see example 2 (b)**

⁵ The "Support for Instrumentation and related Infrastructure" scheme will support the making good of deficits in equipment and related items with a value of between €50,000 and €500,000. This support could represent up to 75-80% of the costs involved with the balance to be met by the host institute.

Please note that the proposed purchase of all equipment must be justified, whether it is deemed to be a significant asset or not, and that 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.

Depreciation calculation:

For the purpose of funding under the STRIVE Programme costs relating to the purchase or leasing of plant or equipment representing a **significant asset** may be charged to the project in accordance with the following conditions:

- The cost of purchased equipment may be recovered **at a rate of 20% depreciation** per annum for **non-computer items** and **33.3%** per annum for **computer hardware** costing in excess of €10,000.
- Off the shelf software is considered a consumable item and is fully reimbursable.
- The cost of hiring plant or equipment shall not exceed the purchase cost of that Equipment.
- Public procurement procedures must be observed in relation to the purchase of all equipment.

The lease or purchase costs to be charged to the Standard Grant Agreement shall be calculated according to the following (**depreciation rule**) formula:

$$(A/B) \times C \times D$$

This represents the eligible costs for Durable Equipment for the duration of the project and is reimbursed on a pro rata basis upon the submission of each financial cost statement.

- A = the period in months during which the durable equipment is used for the project after invoicing
- B = the depreciation period for the durable equipment: 36 months for computer equipment costing less than €25,000 or 60 months for other equipment
- C = The actual cost of the durable equipment
- D = percentage of usage of the durable equipment for the project

Depreciation costs for equipment used for the project but bought before the start of the project are eligible under following conditions:

Plant or equipment which has been purchased or leased prior to the start of the project may be charged providing that the depreciation period has not been exceeded and the equipment has not yet been fully depreciated according to the usual accounting practices or principles of the Grantee. In such circumstances the remaining depreciation (according to the amount of use, in percentage and time) can be eligible under the project. In addition the equipment in question must not have been the subject of funding from any other source.

If value for money becomes an issue due to the limitations of suppliers then this should be 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 on expenditure.

– Examples

1) Equipment treated in the Grantee's records as a consumable:

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.

2) Equipment treated in the Grantee's records as an Asset:

a) New Equipment that does not represent a significant asset to the Grantee after the completion of the project:

Costs related to new equipment that does not represent a significant asset to the Grantee after the completion of the project may, subject to appropriate justification, be claimed in full.

Take for example, a new piece of equipment, with a depreciation period of 60 months purchased in January 2008. If a relevant Grant Award is signed in January 2008 and the duration of the project is 48 months, then the cost of such qualifying equipment could be claimed in full, subject to appropriate justification, under the heading "Equipment- Non Significant Asset" in all Financial Reports related to the project.

b) New Equipment that represents a significant asset to the Grantee after the completion of the project:

Costs related to new equipment that represents a significant asset to the Grantee after the completion of the project cannot be claimed in full and the depreciation calculation must be applied.

Please note however that where the duration of the project exceeds the useful life of the equipment, the cost of the equipment can be depreciated and claimed in full on a pro rata basis over the lifetime of the project.

Depreciated costs in relation to significant assets should be claimed on a pro rata basis under the heading "Equipment- Significant Asset" in all Financial Reports related to the project

c) Equipment bought before the start of the project:

The pro rata depreciation costs related to equipment purchased prior to the start of the project maybe claimed in certain circumstances.

Take for example a piece of equipment with a depreciation period of 36 months purchased in January 2006. If a relevant Grant Award is signed in January 2008 (when 24 months of depreciation has already passed), and the equipment is used for this programme, the Grantee can claim the depreciation costs incurred under the project for the remaining 12 months, provided the equipment in question was not previously subject to public funding.

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 EU.**

Where travel costs are incurred by employees involved in the project and such costs are reimbursed by the participant on the basis of a lump sum or per diem basis then it is the lump sum or 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.

Where individuals are reimbursed for use of their private vehicle for business travel by way of mileage then the 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 in keeping with the participants normal practices.

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

Other Facilities

Other specific actual costs, which do not come 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 the STRIVE 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 included these skills.

A sub-contract or consultancy arrangement is an agreement to provide services relating to tasks required for the project and which cannot be carried out by the participant itself, concluded between a participant and one or more participants 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 best bid in compliance with 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. 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 except in exceptional circumstances. Sub-contract arrangements between participants are not permitted. Core elements of any project funded under the STRIVE programme may not be sub-contracted.

VAT

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 Application Form for funding.

Indirect costs / Overheads

A contribution to overheads of 30% of modified costs is allowed for all projects. Modified costs are defined as all eligible costs excluding durable equipment and external assistance.

6. 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 35% will be made within two months of the notification of 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.

Applicants should familiarise themselves with the project management and reporting requirements for STRIVE funded projects as detailed in the relevant *Terms and Conditions* document and *Guide for Grantees*.

7. Intellectual Property

The STRIVE programme 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's SAFER-data archive (<http://erc.epa.ie/safer>) should be used for this purpose.

On completion of a research project, Principal Investigators & Research Groups are granted a period⁶ of exclusive access to the datasets 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 "Funding Agency Requirements & Guidelines for Managing Research-Generated Intellectual Property" to ensure that knowledge arising from its funded research is translated for public benefit. This document is available at <http://www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/research/funding/research/>.

⁶ 12 months after completion and sign-off of the project report

8. Freedom of Information Act

Information supplied to the EPA may be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and Freedom of Information (Amendment) Act, 2003. Should you wish that any of the information supplied by you in this application should not be disclosed because of its sensitivity, you should, when providing the information, identify the same and specify the reasons for its sensitivity. The EPA will consult with applicants about this information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received.

9. Data Protection Act

Personal information supplied to the STRIVE Programme will be stored by electronic means e.g., database, for use only in connection with this application. The provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act, 2003 will be fully complied with.

10. Further Information

Any enquiry with regard to the above or to the implementation of this phase of the STRIVE programme should be addressed to:

**STRIVE Programme
Environmental Protection Agency
PO Box 3000
Johnstown Castle Estate
Wexford
Ireland**

Telephone: 053-9160600
E-mail: research@epa.ie

APPENDIX 1

Definition of public body

The European Commission defines a public body as “a public sector body or a legal entity governed by private law with a public service mission providing adequate financial guarantees”.

Therefore, there are two clear cases of entities that are considered public bodies:

- Public sector bodies

Any public authority or entity set up under public law by a state or one of its authorities (e.g. government). Even if such an entity has a legal personality, it acts on behalf of the State with regard to and within the limits of its specific areas or competencies. Activities carried out by such authorities or entities may be of a commercial nature.

- legal entities established under private law with a public service mission and providing adequate financial guarantees

With respect to the “public service mission”:

- a) where an entity established under private law is owned by a public sector body or the state, it can be deemed to have a public service mission.
- b) for an entity established under private law that is not owned by a public sector body, the entity must be explicitly granted such a mission through a decision by a public sector body. Secondary and higher education establishments that deliver diplomas recognised by a public authority according to criteria established by the state or perform research with public funding and in accordance with objectives agreed by the state would meet this criterion. In cases of doubt proof of the public service mission can be required from the potential contractor showing that it falls into one of the two categories above.

With respect to the “adequate financial guarantees”:

- a) if the entity is owned by the state then it can be presumed to provide adequate financial guarantees as the state will honour its obligations
- b) if the entity is not owned by the state or a public sector body then it must prove that it will provide adequate financial guarantees (except for the secondary and higher education establishments that are presumed to provide such guarantees). In cases of doubt proof of the existence and adequacy of a financial guarantee can be required from the potential contractor showing that it falls into one of the two categories above.

APPENDIX 2

Definition of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

1. Small and medium-sized enterprises, hereinafter referred to as 'SMEs', are defined as enterprises which:

- have fewer than 250 employees, and
- have either,
 - an annual turnover not exceeding €50 million, or
 - an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding €43 million, and
- conform to the criterion of independence as defined in paragraph 3.

2. Where it is necessary to distinguish between small and medium-sized enterprises, the 'small enterprise' is defined as an enterprise which:

- has fewer than 50 employees and
- has either,
 - an annual turnover not exceeding €10 million, or
 - an annual balance-sheet total not exceeding €10 million,
- conforms to the criterion of independence as defined in paragraph 3.

3. Independent enterprises are those which are not owned as to 25 % or more of the capital or the voting rights by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definitions of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply. This threshold may be exceeded in the following two cases:

- if the enterprise is held by public investment corporations, venture capital companies or institutional investors, provided no control is exercised either individually or jointly,
- if the capital is spread in such a way that it is not possible to determine by whom it is held and if the enterprise declares that it can legitimately presume that it is not owned as to 25 % or more by one enterprise, or jointly by several enterprises, falling outside the definitions of an SME or a small enterprise, whichever may apply.

4. In calculating the thresholds referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, it is therefore necessary to cumulate the relevant figures for the beneficiary enterprise and for all the enterprises that it directly or indirectly controls through possession of 25 % or more of the capital or of the voting rights.

5. Where it is necessary to distinguish micro-enterprises from other SMEs, these are defined as enterprises having fewer than 10 employees, annual turnover not exceeding €2 million and or annual balance sheet total not exceeding €2 million

6. Where, at the final balance-sheet date, an enterprise exceeds or falls below the employee thresholds or financial ceilings, this is to result in its acquiring or losing the status of 'SME', 'medium-sized enterprise', 'small enterprise' or 'micro-enterprise' only if the phenomenon is repeated over two consecutive financial years.

7. The number of persons employed corresponds to the number of annual working units (AWU), that is to say, the number of full-time workers employed during one year with part-time and seasonal workers being fractions of AWU. The reference year to be considered is that of the last approved accounting period.

8. The turnover and balance-sheet total thresholds are those of the last approved 12-month accounting period. In the case of newly established enterprises whose accounts have not yet been approved, the thresholds to apply shall be derived from a reliable estimate made in the course of the financial year."