



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



**Environmental Protection Agency**  
**An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil**

**EPA Research Programme 2014 – 2020**

# **EPA Research 2019 Call - Guide for Applicants**

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The EPA Research Programme is a Government of Ireland initiative funded by the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment

# EPA Research Programme 2014- 2020

This document provides general guidance for applicants under the EPA Research Programme 2014-2020. For further information, please refer to the relevant Terms and Conditions document available on the EPA website ([www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)).

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## Section A: Overview of the Application Process

### Making an Application

Applications **must** be made online at: <https://epa.smartsimple.ie>.

You will need to refer to the following documentation which is available to download from the EPA's Online Grant Management and Application Portal, or from the [Call Documents page on the EPA Website](#):

1. 2019 Technical Description Documents
2. 2019 Terms and Conditions for Support of Grant Awards

The following guidance materials are also available to applicants and can be downloaded from the EPA's Online Grant Management and Application Portal, or from the [Grants Management page on the EPA Website](#):

1. EPA's Online Grant Management and Application Portal – Registration & General User Notes
2. EPA's Online Grant Management and Application Portal – User Guide for Applicants
3. Video Tutorial: Applicant's Guide to the Portal
4. Video Tutorial: Guide to Creating an Application

#### **IMPORTANT:**

- 1) Please refer carefully to the Technical Description Documents and ensure you choose the correct Call Topic Reference when creating your application on the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal as **mistakes will not be rectified**.
- 2) **For all co-funded topics** – researchers **may not** apply for or participate in projects which are to be co-funded by their organisation, even if their organisation would not be in receipt of funding.

### Submission of Proposals

1. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the proposal is submitted **before the deadline for submission of applications by applicants** (as noted in the Technical Description Documents).
2. Your organisation's research office/managing director will be notified by automated email from [donotreply@epa.ie](mailto:donotreply@epa.ie) that the proposal is awaiting their authorisation.

## Authorisation of Proposals

1. For an application to be valid it must be authorised by the relevant contact in your organisation (e.g. research office, managing director) **before the organisational approval deadline for authorisation** (as noted in the Technical Description Document).
2. The authorised person within your organisation may:
  - Authorise a submission: the proposal is then valid and will be processed by the EPA.
  - Request revisions: the applicant must revise the proposal and re-submit it to their research office/managing director for approval.
  - Decline a submission: the proposal will not be processed by the EPA.

### IMPORTANT:

1. Only proposals that have been fully authorised by your organisation before the organisational approval deadline will be considered for evaluation.
2. Proposals that exceed the maximum duration and/or request funding in excess of the maximum specified for each call 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 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

## 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 national advisory panel (National Overview Committee) drawn from relevant government departments, agencies, and the EPA. Selection will be made subject to the availability of funding and in accordance with the following general criteria:

- Relevance to National Environmental Policies and the Call Technical Description
- Value for Money
- Research Integrity
- Gender Equity
- Gender Dimension
- Performance on previous EPA funded projects (where applicable), including compliance with reporting requirements

## 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, and summary comments from the National Overview Committee. 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 [EPA Research Appeals Policy and Procedure](#) is published on the EPA website.

## Section B: Summary of Project Types and Funding Scales

The different types of projects funded through the programme are<sup>1</sup>:

### Project-based Awards

Project Type	Typical Funding	Typical Duration
Desk studies	up to €100,000	6 – 12 months
Medium scale studies	up to €350,000	24 – 36 months
Large scale studies	up to €1,000,000	36 – 48 months
Capability Development	in excess of €1,000,000	48 – 60 months

### Researcher-based Awards

Project Type	Typical Funding	Typical Duration
Doctoral scholarships	up to €96,000	48 months
Research fellowships	up to €250,000	24 – 36 months

**Please note that the information provided in the Tables above is Indicative. Please refer to the relevant technical description document for the maximum duration and funding available for each call topic.**

#### Scholarships

The award of doctoral scholarship funding is restricted to Higher Education Institutions on the island of Ireland. Applications for scholarship funding must be made by the person who intends to be the academic supervisor for the duration of the scholarship.

#### Research Fellowships

The award of research fellowship funding is also restricted to Higher Education Institutions on the island of Ireland. Unless otherwise stated in the technical description document for the relevant call, research fellowships must be filled at post-doctorate researcher level as defined by the [IUA Salary Guidelines](#). Applications must be made by the proposed fellow in conjunction with a host third level institution. All grant awarded research fellowships must be supervised by appropriate experts in the host University/Institute.

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<sup>1</sup> The project types available in each call may vary.

## Section C: Application Form

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

- For an application to be valid, you must complete
  - (a) all fields on the online application form and
  - (b) all sections of the project description template
  - (c) all relevant sections of the budget template
- Do not exceed the max page count
- Font size must be a **minimum of 10 pts** – if the application upload is too difficult to read, it may be invalidated.
- As the following guidance refers to all project types, not every section below will be relevant to you.

The project description upload is subject to a strictly enforced total page maximum, as outlined in the following table:

Project type	Max page allowance (including charts and appendices)
Large scale project / Capability Development	25
Medium scale project	20
Desk Studies	15
Fellowship	20
Scholarship	15

**Section title**
**Literature Review. Pressures, Policy, Solutions**

**Evaluated in two parts (A1 and A2).** Depending on project type and size, this section could include, but is not limited to:

***A1 - Literature review***

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

***A2 - Pressures, Policy, Solutions: relevance to EPA Research Priorities***

- EPA Research aims to identify pressures, inform policy and develop solutions to the environmental challenges facing Ireland
  - **Identify pressures:** Provide assessments of current environmental status and future trends to identify pressures on our environment.
  - **Inform policy:** Generate evidence, review practices and build models to inform policy development and implementation.
  - **Develop solutions:** Use novel technologies and methods that address environmental challenges and provide green economic 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.

Project type	Suggested page count	% of total marks
Large / Capability Development Project	5	25% Part (a) @ 10%, Part (b) @15%
Medium scale project	4	25% Part (a) @ 10%, Part (b) @15%
Desk Studies	2	25% Part (a) @ 10%, Part (b) @15%
Fellowship	3	20% Part (a) @ 10%, Part (b) @10%
Scholarship	2	20%



Section title	Objectives targets and impacts, detailed work-packages, risk and contingencies	
<p>Depending on project type and size, this section could include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstration of the scientific and technical quality, innovation and research content of the proposal</li> <li>- TRLs and SRLs (where relevant). Please see Section E for further information</li> <li>- Project / fellowship statement</li> <li>- Objectives and targets (recommend that these are measurable e.g. SMART)</li> <li>- Outputs and impacts</li> <li>- Risk and contingencies</li> <li>- Detailed work packages (for projects), using work package template below</li> <li>- Work description (for scholarships and fellowships)</li> <li>- Pert and Gantt Charts, examples provided below</li> <li>- Please note that the Work Packages, Pert Chart and Gantt Chart are to be <i>included</i> as part of the total maximum page count of your application.</li> </ul>		
Project type	Suggested Page count	Evaluation %
Large / Capability Development Project	15	30%
Medium scale project	12	30%
Desk Studies	9	30%
Fellowship	10	30%
Scholarship	8	30%

## 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 available to download from the EPA website (see example on the following page). Applicants should also complete the Work Package Summary template which is also available on the EPA 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 and Communications to account for the time to be spent on these activities.

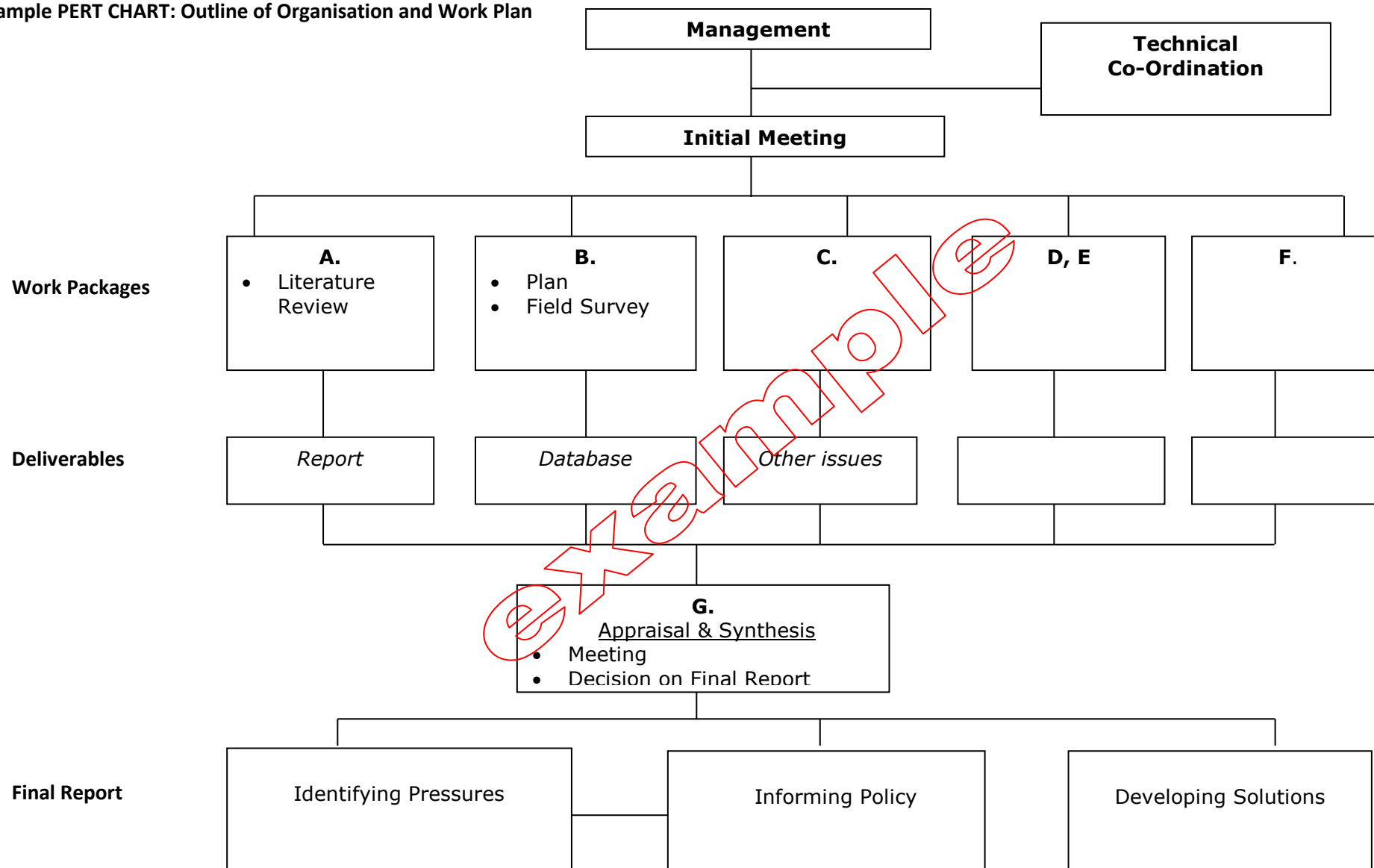
## Sample Work Package Template

<b>Work Package Title:</b>	<i>Please Add the title of the Work Package (WP) here</i>			
<b>Work Package No.:</b>	<i>Please add the number of the Work Package here e.g. WP1</i>			
<b>Cost:</b>	<i>Please add the total cost of the Work Package here</i>			
<b>Start Month:</b>	<i>Indicate the Start Month of this WP as dd/mm/yyyy here</i>	<b>End Month:</b>	<i>Indicate the End Month of this WP as dd/mm/yyyy here</i>	
<b>Work Package Leader Details:</b>	<b>Leader Name</b>	<b>Leader Organisation</b>	<b>Leader Person Months</b>	
	<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 (see e.g. of how to calculate person months below)</i>	
<b>Work Package Partner(s) Details:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Partner Name</b>	<b>Partner Organisation</b>	<b>Partner Person Months</b>
	<b>1.</b>	<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>	<i>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 = <b>0.67 person months (person months should be rounded to 2 decimal places)</b></i>
	<b>2.</b>	<i>Please add the First Name and Surname of the Work Package Partner 2 here</i>	<i>Please add the Organisation of the Work Package Partner 2 here</i>	<i>e.g. 2: Assume there are 214 working days in the year. This person works on the WP two days per month. That is 24 days total. Divide 24 by 214 = 0.112 and then multiply 0.112 by 12 = 1.35 <b>person months (person months should be rounded to 2 decimal places)</b></i>
	<b>3.</b>	<i>Please repeat rows as above depending on the number of Work Package Partners</i>	<i>Please repeat rows as above depending on the number of Work Package Partners</i>	<i>Please repeat rows above depending on the number of Work Package Partners</i>
<b>Objectives:</b>	<i>Please clearly outline the key objectives of this Work Package</i>			
<b>Description of Work:</b>	<p><b>Description of Work (with sub-task titles where appropriate).</b> Provide a detailed description of how listed targets will be met. To include, where applicable,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Methodology</li> <li>Quality control procedures</li> <li>The approach to site selection, sampling locations, data analysis</li> </ul> <p>Procedures for formatting and exchange of data should be identified within the project, especially relevant with project partners</p>			
<b>Deliverables and Milestones:</b>	<i>Please provide details of the Key deliverables and milestones for this Work Package</i>			
<b>Expected Outcomes:</b>	<i>Briefly outline the expected outcomes of this Work Package</i>			

## Sample Work Package Summary Table

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	WP7	Total Person Months	
<i>Please add the First Name and Surname of the Project Participant here</i>	<i>Please add the Organisation Name of the Project Participant</i>	<i>Please select the project participant's role from the dropdown list provided</i>	<i>If this project participant is a Leader of any Work Packages for this project, please list the WPs here. (e.g. WP1, WP4, WP6.) If this project participant is not a Leader of any WPs for this project please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>If the Project Participant is associated with this WP, please add the <b>Person Months</b></i>  <i>If this project participant is not associated with this WP please add n/a</i>	<i>Total WP Person Months of Project Participant</i>

Sample PERT CHART: Outline of Organisation and Work Plan



### 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
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	Cost Statement																			
5	Communication																			
5.1	Leaflets																			
5.2	Project website																			
5.3	Workshops																			
6	Deliverables from the project																			
6.1	Final Cost statement																			
6.2	Final Technical Progress Report (TPR)																			
6.3	End of Project Questionnaire (EPQ) on SmartSimple																			
6.4	2 pager project summary																			

Section title		Communication
<b>Communication Plan</b>		
<p>The aim of the communication plan is to ensure that knowledge generated by the project is communicated effectively, on a continuous basis, to appropriate audiences in the most appropriate format both over the lifetime of the project and in the 12 months following its conclusion. For this purpose, a Communications Plan for the project must be provided.</p> <p>Please note that all projects must comply with the EPA’s policy on Open Access and Data. Please refer to Section E – What else do I need to know for further details.</p> <p>All communication plans should contain the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders</li> <li>• Key Messages</li> <li>• Stakeholder-Specific Messages</li> <li>• Channels</li> <li>• SMART Goals</li> <li>• Outputs</li> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> </ul> <p>Please refer to the <a href="#">EPA Guidelines for research project communication plans</a> when completing this section.</p> <p><b>It is strongly recommended that the applicants familiarise themselves with and utilise the tools provided in the EPA Bridging the Gap Resource Kit:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">EPA Research Report 131</a>: BRIDGE: Tools for science-policy communication;</li> <li>• <a href="#">EPA Research Report 132</a>: Good Practice Guide for science-policy communication; and</li> <li>• <a href="#">EPA Research Report 133</a>: A Knowledge Transfer Guide for Researchers.</li> </ul>		
Project type	Page count / Word Count	Evaluation %
Large / Capability Development Project	3	15%
Medium scale project	2	15%
Desk Studies	2	15%
Fellowship	1	10%
Scholarship	1	10%

Communication Plan	
<p><b>Applicants must complete a copy of this template. Blank copies are available on the EPA website as well as the project description upload available on the application page of SmartSimple.</b></p>	
<p><b>Stakeholders</b> Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy makers</li> <li>• Research community</li> <li>• Steering committee</li> <li>• Public</li> <li>• EPA</li> <li>• NGO's</li> <li>• Public representatives</li> <li>• Local Government</li> <li>• Media etc.</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Message 1</b>	
<b>Key Message 2</b>	
<b>Key Message 3</b>	
<b>Stakeholder specific message 1 – if any</b>	
<b>Stakeholder specific message 2 – if any</b>	
<p><b>Outputs</b> Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Report</li> <li>• Peer Reviewed journal articles</li> <li>• Good practice guides</li> <li>• Leaflets</li> <li>• Toolkits</li> <li>• Book chapters</li> <li>• Models</li> <li>• Databases etc.</li> </ul>	



Channels	Why did you choose this channel	SMART Goal	Time Frame	Evaluation Method	Estimated Budget
<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Newsletter</li> <li>• Social Media</li> <li>• EPA Research Reports</li> <li>• Peer reviewed publications</li> <li>• Project Events or workshops</li> <li>• Attendance at conferences</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Direct contact</li> <li>• Targeted Briefings</li> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Meetings</li> <li>• Infographics</li> <li>• Posters</li> </ul>	<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up a website with all project information in one location will enable the team to disseminate information easily to all stakeholders</li> </ul>	<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up a website within 6 months of project start and update when new project information is available.</li> </ul>	<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setup within 6 months and on-going for duration of project</li> </ul>	<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All project outputs and updates available on website</li> <li>• Use Google analytics to measure visits to website</li> </ul>	<p>Eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• €300 from on-going budget for hosting fees for duration of project</li> <li>• €300 from post dissemination budget for on-going hosting after project completion</li> </ul>

Section title	Project management and project team
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Depending on project type and size, this section could include, but is not limited to:

**Project Management:**

- Organisation and management
- Allocation of work between partners
- Co-ordination between partners (internal and external)
- Roles and responsibilities of personnel involved
- Working with EPA/ external bodies

**Project Team:**

- Qualifications of key researchers
- Suitability of expertise
- Recent research track records of the senior researchers (include details of published papers, citations etc.)
- Local knowledge and participation.
- Role and relevant experience of each participant
- Where new staff will be recruited the recruitment requirements and criteria should be specified.

Project type	Page count / Word Count	Evaluation %
Large / Capability Development project	All 1 page	15%
Medium scale project		15%
Desk Studies		15%
Fellowship		15%
Scholarship		10%

**Section title 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

Project type	Page count / Word Count	Evaluation %
Large / Capacity building project	N/A	N/A
Medium scale project	N/A	N/A
Desk Studies	N/A	N/A
Fellowship	4	20%
Scholarship	2	20%

**Section title 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. Communication costs (on-going and post completion)

Project type	Page count / Word Count	Evaluation %
Large / Capacity building project	All 1 page	15%
Medium scale project		15%
Desk Studies		15%
Fellowship		5%
Scholarship		10%

<b>Section title</b> <b>Policy compliance</b>		
<p>Insert a few lines stating your organisations compliance in relation to policies related to issues such as environment, ethics, equal treatment, research integrity etc.</p>		
<b>Project type</b>	<b>Page count / Word Count</b>	<b>Evaluation %</b>
<b>Large / Capability Development project</b>	All one paragraph	N/A for all project types at evaluation stage. Please note, however, this information will be used to inform the “deliberative process of the National Overview Committee”
<b>Medium scale project</b>		
<b>Desk Studies</b>		
<b>Fellowship</b>		
<b>Scholarship</b>		

## Section D: Budget & Financial Eligibility Rules

### Budget Template Completion

Details of how to complete the budget template for each grant type are contained in the template itself, under the section headed 'instructions'.

**IMPORTANT:** Proposals must not exceed the maximum budget specified for each Call Topic.

### Grant Aid Rates & Eligible Costs

#### General Funding Principles

The EPA Research Programme 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 Research Programme, 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 the EPA Research Programme 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 a specific EPA 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 under the EPA Research Programme. 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 Research Programme 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 to the EPA Research Programme. 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 EPA grant 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 EPA grant 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. Please see Example 1 on page 25.

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**

The EPA Research Programme 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) - Please see Example 2a on page 25.

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 2b on page 25.

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.

### Depreciation calculation:

For the purpose of funding under the EPA Research 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 equipment 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 of plant and equipment to be charged to the project 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.

<b>A =</b>	The period in months during which the durable equipment is used for the project after invoicing
<b>B =</b>	The depreciation period for the durable equipment: 36 months for computer equipment or 60 months for other equipment
<b>C =</b>	The actual cost of the durable equipment
<b>D =</b>	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 – please see Example 2c on page 26.

If value for money becomes an issue due to the limitations of suppliers 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 to fund such expenditure.

## Examples

<b>Example 1</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Equipment treated in the Grantee's records as a consumable:
<b>Example</b>	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.
<b>Example 2a</b>	
<b>Title</b>	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:
<b>Example</b>	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 2018 for €30,000. If a relevant Grant Award is signed in January 2018 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>Example 2b</b>	
<b>Title</b>	Equipment treated in the Grantee's records as an Asset: b) New Equipment that represents a significant asset to the Grantee after the completion of the project:
<b>Example</b>	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

Example 2c	
<b>Title</b>	Equipment treated in the Grantee's records as an Asset: c) Equipment bought before the start of the project:
<b>Example</b>	<p>The pro rata depreciation costs related to equipment purchased prior to the start of the project maybe claimed in certain circumstances.</p> <p>Take for example a piece of equipment with a depreciation period of 60 months purchased in January 2014. If a relevant Grant Award is signed in January 2018 (when 48 months of depreciation has already passed), and the equipment is used exclusively for this project, 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.</p>

### 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 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 under the EPA Research Programme may not be sub- contracted.

## **Communication**

It is expected that each participant, as part of their submission, should include provision for communication costs (including costs associated with open access publishing following approval by EPA) to be incurred over the life of the project as well as, post completion dissemination costs incurred in the 12 months following the completion date of the project. Such costs should collectively represent no more than 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. The budget for these costs is not transferable. It is expected that this 5% provision will be made up of:

- Post Completion Dissemination Costs, which should represent a maximum of 2% of the grant aid approved for the project, and
- On-going Communication activities and events over the life of the project, which should represent a maximum of 3% of the grant aid approved for the project. For the avoidance of doubt the costs associated with presenting at workshops/conferences (e.g. conference fees) during the lifetime of the project are deemed to be on-going communication costs. The costs associated with travelling to and from the conference should be included in the travel and subsistence budget category

### 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 funded under the EPA Research Programme.

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 E: 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 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.

### Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs)

Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) are indicators of the maturity level of particular technologies and are currently used in Horizon 2020. This measurement system provides a common understanding of technology status and addresses the entire innovation chain. There are nine technology readiness levels; TRL 1 being the lowest and TRL 9 the highest (see below). Where technologies are being developed, it is not expected that high TRLs will be achieved as part of the remit of EPA funded research. Not all projects funded by EPA are expected to generate technologies – in such cases the Not Relevant option should be selected on the online application form.

- TRL 1 – basic principles observed
- TRL 2 – technology concept formulated
- TRL 3 – experimental proof of concept
- TRL 4 – technology validated in lab
- TRL 5 – technology validated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 6 – technology demonstrated in relevant environment (industrially relevant environment in the case of key enabling technologies)
- TRL 7 – system prototype demonstration in operational environment
- TRL 8 – system complete and qualified
- TRL 9 – actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space)

### Societal Readiness Levels (SRL)

Societal Readiness Level is defined according to Innovation Fund Denmark as a way of assessing the level of societal adaptation of, for instance, a particular social project, a technology, a product, a process, an intervention, or an innovation (whether social or technical) to be integrated into society. If the societal readiness for the social or technical solution is expected to be low, suggestions for a realistic transition towards societal adaptation are required. Naturally, the lower the societal adaptation is, the better the plan for transition must be. SRL 1 is the lowest and SRL 9 is the highest level.

- SRL 1 – identifying problem and identifying societal readiness
- SRL 2 – formulation of problem, proposed solution(s) and potential impact, expected societal readiness; identifying relevant stakeholders for the project.
- SRL 3 – initial testing of proposed solution(s) together with relevant stakeholders
- SRL 4 – problem validated through pilot testing in relevant environment to substantiate proposed impact and societal readiness
- SRL 5 – proposed solution(s) validated, now by relevant stakeholders in the area
- SRL 6 – solution(s) demonstrated in relevant environment and in co-operation with relevant stakeholders to gain initial feedback on potential impact
- SRL 7 – refinement of project and/or solution and, if needed, retesting in relevant environment with relevant stakeholders
- SRL 8 – proposed solution(s) as well as a plan for societal adaptation complete and qualified
- SRL 9 – actual project solution(s) proven in relevant environment

**Stages SRL 1-3** reflect the early work in a research project, including suggesting and testing on a preliminary basis a technical and/or social solution to a technical or a societal problem. Here reflections about the general societal readiness towards the idea and its proposed solution(s) are required, including identifying relevant stakeholders and how to include them (such as end users, the right communities, etc.).

**Stages SRL 4-6** represent the actual solution(s), the research hypothesis, and testing it/them in the relevant context in co-operation with relevant stakeholders, while keeping a focus on impact and society's readiness for the product. In these stages expectations on the societal adaptation must be described in specific terms and, to the extent possible, be part of the test phase.

**Stages SRL 7-9** include the end stages of the research project, including refining the solution(s), implementation and dissemination of results and/or solution(s). Here the plan for addressing the societal readiness on a practical level to gain impact, creating awareness, disseminating results, etc., will be carried out.

## Open Access of Publications and Data

Previous EPA Research programmes have encouraged an open access policy over the past number of years. For the purpose of formalising our requirements for open access the EPA Research Programme is aligning its policy on Open Access with Horizon 2020.

### Open Access

All project-based awards and fellowships funded by the EPA Research Programme are required to ensure open access via Green<sup>2</sup> 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](#).

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<sup>2</sup> 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" and "EPA Research 2014-2020";
- ii. The name of the pillar, sub-pillar and grant number;
- iii. The publication date, and length of embargo period (in the case of green open access), and
- iv. 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 Research 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 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 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 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 Research Programme 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 EPA Research Programme 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 EPA Research Programme.

## 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 EPA Research projects.

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 Swan<sup>3</sup> Institutional award by the required timeframe.

Applicants are also requested to demonstrate that they have given full consideration to any potential gender dimension<sup>4</sup> 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 [research@epa.ie](mailto:research@epa.ie)

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

<sup>4</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/gender\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/gender_en.htm)