

## **EPA Research - 2017 Call**

### **EPA Research – Climate Research Call 2017 Reissue of topic: Climate Change and Land**

**Technical Description  
July 2017**

The EPA Research Programme is funded by the Irish Government.

## Environmental Protection Agency Research Call 2017: Climate

### Reissue of Topic on: Climate Change and Land Research Fellowship

This document provides the **Technical Description** for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) **Climate** Research Call 2017 – [Reissue of Topic on: Climate Change and Land](#). Applicants should read the following carefully and also consult the other documentation provided (i.e. Guide for Applicants, Guide for Grantees, EPA Terms and Conditions for support of grant awards).

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# 1. Introduction

The EPA's Research Programme 2014-2020 is designed to identify pressures, inform policy and develop solutions to environmental challenges through the provision of strong evidence-based scientific knowledge:

- **Identifying Pressures:** Providing assessments of current environmental status and future trends to identify pressures on our environment.
- **Informing Policy:** Generating evidence, reviewing practices and building models to inform policy development and implementation.
- **Developing Solutions:** Using novel technologies and methods that address environmental challenges and provide green economy opportunities.

## Ireland's Climate & Air Quality

Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2016<sup>1</sup> states that responding effectively to climate change is both urgent and long term. It is urgent in that our global actions and responses in the next 5–15 years may effectively lock in large-scale and irreversible planetary changes over this and subsequent centuries. While the 2015 Paris Agreement sets the international agenda, Ireland's actions for addressing climate change need to occur at national, sub-national levels and within and between communities. The National Policy Position (DECLG, 2014), the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015 and the draft National Mitigation Plan (DCCA, 2017) provide the policy framework for these actions. These in combination with EU-level emissions targets for 2020 and 2030 will inform and specify the short-term actions and longer-term strategies to advance mitigation and adaptation actions (EPA, 2016). Similarly, the UNECE Air Convention, the EU Clean Air Package and the resulting European and national legislation set the agenda and policy framework for addressing air quality issues.

## EPA Climate Research

A sustained Climate Research Programme is an essential component of Ireland's role in meeting its requirements under The Paris Agreement 2015, the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act (2015), the UNECE Air Convention, the EU Clean Air Package and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and is committed to aligning our research to assist in the delivery of these goals.

The EPA Climate Research priorities include:

- Supporting the transition to a low carbon, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by the end of the year 2050. This will be done through developing the public, policy makers and the research community understanding of what this objective means in an Irish context and how it might be achieved.
- Developing integrated approaches and growth opportunities through management of the challenges that arise from climate change, air quality and other environmental issues.

The EPA Research Programme has been allocated funding of approximately € 1.14m for new commitments in Climate research in 2017.

The EPA Climate Research Pillar is structured into four thematic areas of research as follows:

- Carbon Stocks, GHG Emissions, Sinks and Management Options
- Climate Solutions, Transition Management and Opportunities
- Ireland's Future Climate, its Impacts, and Adaptation Options
- Air science

Multi- and inter-disciplinary research is required on these themes, with expected social, economic, technological, environmental and policy impacts.

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<sup>1</sup> [\*Ireland's State of the Environment Report 2016 – Environmental Protection Agency 2016\*](#)

## Funding Structure

The EPA invites research proposals for a [Climate Change and Land Research Fellowship](#). This **Research Fellowship** will be for 36 months with an indicative budget of up to €220,000.

**This topic was previously included in the call launched on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 2017 but received no response.**

## Value for Money

All research proposals must **build on findings and recommendations** from past and current research<sup>2</sup> projects (where relevant) and **demonstrate value for money**.

## Open Access and Open Data

All projects must comply with the EPA's **Open Data** and **Open Access** rules, which are aligned with Horizon 2020 for the 2014-2020 EPA Research Programme.

Where project outputs include data and/or technical solutions (websites, developed software, database solutions etc.), the format of same **must be agreed with the EPA** to ensure that they are compatible with EPA IT infrastructure and can be maintained by the EPA after the completion of the project.

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<sup>2</sup> including EPA-funded, other Irish and EU and international research projects and initiatives/activities

## Application Process

### Making an application online:

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

### Guide to the EPA online application system:

The guide to the EPA online application system, '2017 Quick guide to the EPA online portal (making an application)', is available for download at

<http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/research/opencalls/currentcalldocuments/>.

### What to include in the application form:

To make the best application possible, it is recommended that you read the '2017 EPA Research guide for applicants' before drafting and submitting an application, available at:

<http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/research/opencalls/currentcalldocuments/>.

### To make an application under any of the topic areas:

Applicants must choose the correct **Call Topic Reference**, as indicated in this Document from the list under the OPEN Calls heading on the homepage of SmartSimple the EPA's Grant Application and Project Management system

It is the responsibility of the **Applicants** to ensure that 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**.

**FAILURE TO MEET EITHER OF THE ABOVE DEADLINES MEANS YOUR PROPOSAL WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING**

## 2. Call Content

### Carbon Stocks, GHG Emissions, Sinks and Management Options

Research undertaken under this thematic area aims to improve understanding of greenhouse gas emissions and sinks thereby providing better information to support actions to mitigate emissions and enhance sinks. Research in this area contributes to improving inventory and projections methodologies for estimation of emissions and sinks of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs), and verification of these by independent analysis.

The estimation of emissions and sinks of GHGs from agriculture and land use remains a key uncertainty within Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF). The dynamic of land use within Ireland is not fully understood, particularly the impact of management of land within agriculture. Analysis is required to assess the potential of this activity on a national scale. The potential for greenhouse gas emissions and removals from peatland due to the impact of human activities, are also a cause of on-going concern.

**Project Title: Climate Change and Land**

**Project Type: Research Fellowship**

*To make an application under this topic area, you must use the following Call Topic Reference:*

***Climate 2017 Call - Project 11***

#### Background:

The work of the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) is central to assessment of a broad range of climate change related research and the communication of key issues and challenges including policy options. The IPCC is to produce a Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems<sup>3</sup> also known as the Special Report on Climate Change and Land (SRCL) as part of its 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment Cycle.

Many of topics within the scope of the Special Report are of direct relevance for Irish land use, food production and Climate Change actions. The Special Report will progress through several drafting stages and Lead Author Meetings (LAM). The SRCL will be submitted to the IPCC for approval by August 2019, with the detailed timetable for the drafting published on the IPCC website<sup>14</sup>.

This research could focus on co-benefits and trade-offs between mitigation of GHG emissions, and enhancing carbon removals from the atmosphere and other sustainable development objectives. The aim of this proposed research project is to identify gaps in knowledge including tools for land use management planning and policy development.

Applicants are invited to propose research to identify gaps in knowledge including tools for land use management planning and policy development. This research could focus on co-benefits and trade-offs between mitigation of GHG emissions, and enhancing carbon removals from the atmosphere and other sustainable development objectives. The fellow will need to keep abreast of the latest research informing the SRCL drafting progress and the implications of the international research for Ireland.

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<sup>3</sup> [\*IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems\*](#)

### Objectives & Expected Outputs:

The proposed research could consider the following:

- Providing information to assess integrated mitigation and adaptation options which have potential for adoption in Ireland.
- Providing strategic co-benefits with respect to other environmental objectives such as enhance biodiversity and water resource management water quality.
- Identify gaps in knowledge including tools for land use management planning and policy development.
- It will ensure that Ireland has the most up to date knowledge of global and regional emissions and removals of GHG associated with land use and land management.

It is expected that the Research Fellow would work closely with the EPA, DAFM and other stakeholders, including the Technical Support Unit of the IPCC Working Group <sup>3</sup><sup>4</sup>, as appropriate.

**It is strongly recommended that researcher consult with the IPCC Technical Support Unit (TSU) for Working Group III to ensure that their proposal is compatible with its objectives. (Please email your query to [research@epa.ie](mailto:research@epa.ie), who will then liaise with the IPCC Technical Support Unit)**

Outputs from this project MUST build on existing research and information available. Please refer to [Section 3](#) for more information regarding EPA-funded expected outputs.

### Project Structure and Funding:

This topic is a **36-month Research Fellowship**, with an **indicative** budget of up to **€220,000** (which includes a 5% provision for communication costs<sup>5</sup>). Awards will be made in line with the Irish Universities Association recommended salary scales. Please refer to the **2017 Guide for Applicants** for further details.

**It is expected that this project would start in November/December 2017.**

**It is recommended** that Fellowship applicants identify a host organisation and supervisor prior to submission of completed proposals. **If a host organisation cannot be identified by the submission deadline**, the applicant may **register** on the EPA Grant Application & Project Management Portal under the Organisation entitled: **‘Organisation to be confirmed’**. A suitable host organisation must be identified during the review stage. **Failure to do so will disqualify.**

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<sup>4</sup> [Working Group III Mitigation of Climate Change](#)

<sup>5</sup> For example, a €100,000 grant award is made up of €95,000 for project costs, and €5,000 for communication costs (€3,000 of which relates to communication activities and events which take place over the lifetime of the project and €2,000 which relates to post completion dissemination costs).



### 3. Expected Outputs

For all projects submitted under the 2017 Climate Call, expected outputs include, but are not limited to:

- **Final Report**, which should provide a clear and detailed account of all the steps and methodologies used during the project and ensure that the objectives, set out above, are met – including recommendations.
- **Synthesis Report** (20-30pp), which provide a clear non-technical summary of the research and of the recommendations.
- **Dissemination 2-pager**, which will be used to disseminate the findings of the research to the key stakeholders.
- **Workshop/Dissemination event(s)** to all stakeholders in the relevant arena (e.g. Policy, monitoring, regulatory, NGOs, media, public, etc.).

The list provided above is indicative and relevant alternatives will be considered. Please consult the **2017 Guide for Applicants, 2017 Guide for Grantees** and the **EPA Terms and Conditions of award** for the full list of interim and final reporting requirements.

A **dedicated website/webpage/Twitter account** should be created and maintained, presenting the project and work carried to-date.

It is also expected that a number of **dissemination outputs**, such as posters, leaflets, newsletters, policy briefs, peer-reviewed publications and presentations, will arise from the projects.

It is essential that applicants clearly demonstrate, in their proposal, the **policy-relevance** of the outputs of their proposed research; the **applicability** of their findings; and how these outputs address a knowledge-gap and can be **efficiently transferred/applied to the implementation** of water-related policies and the protection of our water resources.

## 4. Indicative Timeframe

25 <sup>th</sup> of July 2017:	Call Opening
1 <sup>st</sup> of September 2017 (17.00):	Deadline for queries relating to the technical contents of this call
8 <sup>th</sup> of September 2017 (17.00):	Deadline for submission of applications by applicants
15 <sup>th</sup> of September 2017 (17.00):	Organisation Approval Deadline for authorisation by Research Offices
September/October 2017:	Evaluation Process
October/November 2017:	Negotiation <sup>6</sup>
November / December 2017:	Grant Award of Successful Project

## 5. Further Information

Information on current research projects being supported by the programme is available in the Research Section of the EPA web site ([www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/research](http://www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/research)).

Alternatively, for further information on this call, please contact [research@epa.ie](mailto:research@epa.ie)

Follow us on Twitter [@EPAResearchNews](https://twitter.com/EPAResearchNews) to keep up-to-date with all of our activities

Additional Documents available from the EPA website:

<http://www.epa.ie/pubs/reports/research/opencalls/currentcalldocuments/>

- *2017 EPA Research Guide for Applicants*
- *2017 EPA Research Guide for Grantees*
- *2017 EPA Research Terms & Conditions for Support of Grant Awards*
- *2017 Quick guide to the EPA on-line portal (How to make an application)*
- *EPA's Open Data and Open Access Rules*

**All queries MUST be submitted to [research@epa.ie](mailto:research@epa.ie)**

**All queries, other than on the submission process, must be submitted by the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2017, 5pm at the latest. No queries will be entertained afterwards.**

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<sup>6</sup> The EPA may consider calling the shortlisted applicants for interview at this stage.