

Environmental Protection Agency
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil



EPA Research Programme 2021-2030 Fast-Track to Policy Funding Guidelines and Terms & Conditions

Version 3 – 26/04/2022

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

EPA Research Programme 2021-2030

This document provides general guidance for applicants and grantees of the Fast-Track to Policy Funding Scheme of the EPA Research Programme 2021-2030 and includes the Terms and Conditions for Support of Grant Awards.

Disclaimer

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained in this document, complete accuracy cannot be guaranteed. The Environmental Protection Agency does not accept any responsibility whatsoever for loss or damage occasioned or damages claimed to have been occasioned, in part or in full, as a consequence of any person acting, or refraining from acting, as a result of a matter contained in this document

Document Version History

| Version No. | Changes Made |
|-------------|--|
| Version 2 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Included clarification on the funding rates available to private entity organisations. 2. Included clarification on the EPA’s position regarding budgeted pension costs with regard to Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 28/2016. 3. Clarification on the meaning of Research Performing Organisation added. |
| Version 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added reference and link to the EPA Research Appeals Policy. • Updated section on Intellectual Property • Added a link to the National Research Integrity Forum document “Framework to Enhance Research Integrity in Research Collaborations”. • Updated the Glossary to include clarification on organisations considered by the EPA to be Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). • Updated the Glossary of Terms to expand the clarification on organisations considered by the EPA to be Research Performing Organisations (RPOs). |

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| PART 1: Guidance for Applicants | 1 |
| Important Information for All Applicants | 1 |
| Section A: Overview of the Application Process | 2 |
| Making an Application | 2 |
| Submission of Proposals | 2 |
| Authorisation of Proposals | 3 |
| EPA Proposal Eligibility Check | 3 |
| Evaluation | 4 |
| Notification of Outcome of Evaluation | 5 |
| Appeals | 5 |
| Section B: Application Form | 6 |
| Section C: Budget & Financial Eligibility Rules | 6 |
| Section E: Grant Award | 12 |
| PART 2: Guidance for Grantees | 13 |
| Section A: Payment of the Research Grant | 13 |
| Financial Management Systems | 13 |
| Tax Clearance | 13 |
| Insurance | 13 |
| Section B: Project Management | 14 |
| Project Meetings | 14 |
| Section C: Deviation from the Original Proposal | 15 |
| Project Time Extension | 15 |
| Travel Outside the EU or UK | 15 |
| Section D: Project Outputs and Deliverables | 15 |
| EPA Research Evidence Synthesis Report | 17 |
| End of Project Questionnaire (EPQ) | 17 |
| Technical Report | 18 |
| Policy Brief | 18 |
| 3-Year Post Completion Survey | 18 |
| Literature Review (for publication as an EPA Research Report) | 18 |
| Literature Review (not for publication as an EPA Research Report) | 19 |
| Interim Report (e.g. feasibility/scoping study) | 19 |
| Best Practice Guide | 19 |
| Knowledge Transfer, Communication, Dissemination and Publicity | 19 |
| PART 3: Terms and Conditions for Support of Grant Awards | 20 |
| Section A: Funding | 20 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Section B: EPA Requirements for Grantees | 21 |
| Section C: Reporting, Monitoring and Accounting | 22 |
| Section D: Payment of the grant | 23 |
| Section E: Project Completion/Termination | 23 |
| Section F: Notices | 24 |
| Section G: Transfer and Assignment..... | 24 |
| Section H: Indemnity | 24 |
| Section I: Data Protection..... | 25 |
| PART 4: Other Information..... | 26 |
| Section A: Intellectual Property..... | 26 |
| Section B: Research Integrity..... | 26 |
| Section C: Freedom of Information Act..... | 27 |
| Section D: Personal Information..... | 27 |
| Section E: Open Access of Publications and Data..... | 27 |
| Section F: Ethical and Gender Issues | 29 |
| Section G: Further Information | 29 |
| Appendix I – Glossary of Terms | 30 |

PART 1: Guidance for Applicants

Important Information for All Applicants

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- With the exception of applications for Scholarship funding, **all applications must be created and submitted by the Lead Applicant** – this includes applications for Research Fellowships. Applications submitted on behalf of another individual (e.g. an application for a Research Fellowship created and submitted by a supervisor with the intention of hiring a Fellow if the application is successful) will not be accepted. The EPA is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the project team/application details. Should it subsequently transpire that an application has been submitted by a third-party who is not the Lead Applicant the application will be rejected by the EPA and any offers of funding will be withdrawn.
- Applications must be submitted under the correct Call Topic (as indicated in the Technical Description Document) – mistakes will not be rectified. Proposals submitted under an incorrect Call Topic will be considered to be ineligible and **will not proceed to evaluation stage under any circumstances.**
- 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.
- Proposals that exceed the maximum duration and/or request funding in excess of the maximum specified for the Call Topic will be considered ineligible and **will not proceed to evaluation stage under any circumstances.**
- 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 Lead Applicant, Lead Organisation, Co-Applicants, Co-Applicant Organisations, and scope of the proposed research and associated tasks) **will invalidate your application.**
- The following must be completed:
 - All fields on the online application form (including the Work Package Summary Table)
 - All sections of the project description template (applicants must use the template provided in the online application form – **variations will not be accepted by the EPA and will render the proposal ineligible**)
 - All relevant sections of the budget template (applicants must use the template provided in the online application form – **variations will not be accepted by the EPA and will render the proposal ineligible**).

Section A: Overview of the Application Process

Making an Application

PLEASE NOTE:

Unless otherwise stated in the Technical Description Document, **Fast Track to Policy Calls are only open to** applicants from a Higher Education Institution (HEI)¹, other Public Body/State Organisation, or a Research Performing Organisation² located on the island of Ireland³.

Applications must be made online at: <https://epa.smartsimple.ie>. Guidance materials on using the portal can be downloaded when logged into the system, or from the [Grants Management page on the EPA website](#).

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. EPA Research Fast-track to Policy Technical Description document
2. EPA Research Fast-track to Policy Funding Guidelines and Terms & Conditions

Please also refer to the **Glossary of Terms** included in this document.

The value entered into the project duration field on the online application must be a whole number of months. Where the maximum duration as specified in the Technical Description Document is not a whole number of months (e.g. 2 weeks), please enter the nearest whole number in the online field and note that the project must be completed within the timeline indicated in the Technical Description document.

Submission of Proposals

1. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the proposal is submitted **before the Submission Deadline** (as noted in the Technical Description document and indicated on the online application form).
2. It is also the responsibility of the lead applicant to obtain explicit consent of all individual participants for their inclusion in the proposal, including the use of any personal information as may be required.
3. Your organisation's Research Proposal Authoriser(s)⁴ will be notified by automated email from donotreply.epa@smartsimple.ie that the proposal is awaiting their authorisation.

¹ See Glossary of Terms

² See Glossary of Terms

³ For the avoidance of doubt an applicant organisation is considered to be located on the island of Ireland where it has an established legal presence here and is registered for all relevant employee and corporate taxes in the respective jurisdictions of either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland.

⁴ See Glossary of Terms

Authorisation of Proposals

1. For a submission to be valid it must be authorised by the Research Proposal Authoriser in your organisation **before the Approval Deadline** (as noted in the Technical Description document and indicated on the online application form).
2. The authorised person within your organisation may:
 - a. **Authorise a submission:** your organisation has confirmed they support your application
 - b. **Request revisions:** your organisation has requested that you must revise the proposal and re-submit it for their approval.
 - c. **Decline a submission:** your organisation has not supported your application and the proposal will not be processed by the EPA.

IMPORTANT:

Only proposals that have been authorised by your organisation before the Approval Deadline will be considered for evaluation.

It is the responsibility of the Lead Applicant to ensure that proposals are submitted before the call deadline, and the responsibility of the relevant Research Proposal Authoriser to ensure that proposals are authorised before the organisational approval deadline. Deadlines are absolute and are enforced by the system automatically. Discussion **will not** be entered into in the case of late submissions and/or approvals, how-so ever caused. **The EPA's decision in this matter will be final.**

FAILURE TO MEET EITHER OF THE DEADLINES OUTLINED MEANS THAT YOUR PROPOSAL WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR FUNDING.

EPA Proposal Eligibility Check

In order to proceed to the Evaluation Stage, your proposal will undergo an eligibility check by the EPA. In order to be eligible, **your proposal must:**

- Address the correct Call Topic.
- Not exceed the maximum budget available for the Technical Description document.
- Not exceed the maximum duration available for the Technical Description document.
- Be submitted by an applicant from a Higher Education Institution on the island of Ireland⁵, other Public Body/State Organisation, or Research Performing Organisation⁶ located on the island of Ireland⁷ (unless specifically stated otherwise in the Technical Description document).

⁵ See Glossary of Terms

⁶ See Glossary of Terms

⁷ For the avoidance of doubt an applicant organisation is considered to be located on the island of Ireland where it has an established legal presence here and is registered for all relevant employee and corporate taxes in the respective jurisdictions of either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland.

- Be submitted using the correct templates that are provided via the online application form (Project Description Template and Budget Template).

Failure to comply with all of the eligibility criteria will invalidate the application and it will not proceed to evaluation stage under any circumstances.

Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated using the following predefined evaluation criteria:

1. Understanding of the Policy and/or Practice Context (200 marks),
2. Evidence Review Methodology (400 marks),
3. Expertise of the Research Team (100 marks),
4. Implementation (300 marks).

| Rating System | |
|------------------|---|
| 0% - Fail | The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information. |
| 20% - Poor | The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses. |
| 40% - Fair | The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses. |
| 60% - Good | The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present. |
| 80% - Very Good | The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present. |
| 100% - Excellent | The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor. |

Evaluators (a minimum of three) will be identified from panels of national experts with relevant experience and expertise in specific subject areas. In order to proceed to the award stage, the highest ranked proposal must:

- Achieve a minimum average of 60% 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).

Notification of Outcome of Evaluation

All applicants will be notified in writing via email from donotreply.epa@smartsimple.ie of the results of the evaluation process. The notification will include an Evaluation Summary Report, which contains summary comments from each member of the evaluation panel. Please note, the names of the individual evaluators will not be disclosed. If your proposal has been recommended for funding the email will contain details in relation to the requirement to respond to technical and financial queries (Negotiation Process). The time limit for responding to the queries will be noted in the automated email. If project negotiations are unsuccessful a formal offer of funding will not be made.

Successful applicants must be ready to start working on the project as per the date indicated in the Technical Description document.

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](#) is published on the EPA website.

Section B: 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,
- b) all sections of the project description template which is available to download from the online application form
- c) all relevant sections of the budget template which is available to download from the online application form.

Instructions on how to complete both the budget and project description templates for each grant and organisation type are contained in the templates themselves.

- Do not exceed the max page count (i.e. 10 pages)
- Font size must be a minimum of 11 pts – if the application upload is too difficult to read, it may be invalidated.

Section C: Budget & Financial Eligibility Rules

General Funding Principles

The EPA Research Programme provides funding to Grantees on a not-for-profit basis (i.e. on a cost reimbursement basis only) the purpose of which is to generate knowledge for public good.

The term 'Grantee' is defined in the Notification of Award of Research Grant and includes the lead applicant and lead organisation. It means each of them separately and all of them together or any number of them collectively.

A core principle of the funding provided under the EPA Research Programme is that it promotes the development of research capacity on the island of Ireland. Therefore, applications for funding will only be considered where the **lead applicant organisation is located on the island of Ireland**⁸.

For all lead organisations located on the island of Ireland, 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,

⁸ For the avoidance of doubt an applicant organisation is considered to be located on the island of Ireland where it has an established legal presence here and is registered for all relevant employee and corporate taxes in the respective jurisdictions of either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland.

- 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,
- overtime,
- interest owed,
- provisions for doubtful debts,
- resources made available to a Grantee free of charge,
- off the shelf software and personal computing equipment (including laptops),
- 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,
- on-going servicing, repair and maintenance costs of equipment / motor vehicles,
- 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, including travel to attend interviews,
- contributions to private pension schemes,
- bonus payments or other perquisites paid to staff whether in cash or in-kind.

Funding Rates

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 may be up to a maximum of 100% depending on the status/type of the organisation and where all of the costs incurred are deemed eligible. The maximum funding rates by organisation type are outlined in the following table:

| Organisation Type/Status ⁹ | Max Funding Rate |
|---|------------------|
| Publicly Funded Higher Education Institution (HEI) | 100% |
| Public / State Body | 100% |
| Research Performing Organisation (RPO) | 100% |
| Private Small Company | 80% |
| Private Medium Company | 75% |
| Private Large Company | 65% |
| Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Public Benefit Entity (PBE) or Charity | 95% |

Personnel

- For publicly funded Higher Education Institution's (HEI's), Research Performing Organisations (RPOs), and other Public /State Body Organisations only the salary costs associated with staff recruited specifically for the purpose of the project are eligible (i.e. staff costs associated with permanent staff based in HEIs/RPOs/Public /State Body Organisations are ineligible).
- 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) or the Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 28/2016. This rate must be specified in the budget.
- 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 the Grantee 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.

⁹ See Glossary of Terms

- Costs for remuneration of salary should be taken from the payroll records of the lead applicant organisation and should reflect the total gross remuneration plus the employers' portion of PRSI and employers pension contributions (where eligible). 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.
- For private entity organisations only 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, may be eligible all be it at the applicable reduced funding rate.
- 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. When submitting the final invoice for payment in respect of the completed research undertaken, applicants will be required to append a summary of time incurred by each member of the project team.

Pensions

- 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 HEI, Public / State Body or RPO and in addition are operated in accordance with the relevant requirements of the ECF, the SPSPS and DEPR Circular 28/2016.
- However, in respect of DPER Circular 28/2016 the EPA recognise the confusion in regard to pension in the Higher Education and wider Public Sector and understand there is ongoing dialogue between DPER and representative bodies of Public Service employers on the matter. In recognition of this fact the EPA will allow HEIs to budget for pension in accordance with IUA pay scales, however funding in respect of all such budgeted amounts and the associated overhead will be ringfenced and will only be eligible for inclusion on claims for reimbursement when revised and specific guidance on the matter has been issued from DPER to the EPA. Should revised guidance not be issued prior to the completion date of affected projects then the funding allocated to pension (and associated overhead) based on the budget submission for the project will be decommitted. Reallocations of such funding will not be permitted under any circumstances.
- Where staff appointments within HEIs, RPOs or other Public/State Bodies are funded from existing public finances then claims for funding in respect of salary costs and/or pension obligations are not permitted.
- In addition, for all organisation types pension contributions paid to private pension funds, or funds other than the public service pension funds as outlined above, will not be eligible for funding under the EPA Research Programme.
- 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.

IMPORTANT:

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

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 lead organisation.
- are not treated as capital expenditure in accordance with the accounting conventions and policies of the lead organisation.
- 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.

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 employment status, salary costs and timesheet outlining the time spent providing the services will be required for each staff member.

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 lead organisation's 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 or the UK.

Where travel costs are incurred by employees involved in the project and such costs are reimbursed by the lead organisation 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 lead organisation 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 organisation's normal practices.

Where researchers outside the State are required 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 Grantee's original submission, and appropriate justification being provided by the relevant individual. 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.

Communication

The dissemination and communication of research findings to stakeholders including policy makers, the research community and the public is a key objective for these projects, therefore personnel, time and budget should be made available for these tasks over the life of the project.

It is expected that each lead organisation, as part of their submission, should include provision for communication costs to be incurred over the life of the project (including costs associated with open access publishing following approval by EPA). Such costs should collectively represent no more than 3% of the total grant aid approved for each individual organisation 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.

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 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 lead organisation is registered for Value Added Tax (VAT) and is 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 VAT, the amounts included in their application for funding and subsequent claims for reimbursement should be the VAT inclusive amount. Organisations 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 a maximum of 30% of modified costs is allowed for research projects funded under the EPA Research Programme.

Modified costs are defined as all eligible costs excluding communication costs.

Section E: Grant Award

Awards of research grants will be made subject to satisfactory negotiation. An initial advance payment of up to 50% will be made within two months of the Notification of Award of Research Grant being issued. The second and final payment will be made on receipt of an invoice for the appropriate amount together with a Schedule of costs in support of the total grant award.

PART 2: Guidance for Grantees

Section A: Payment of the Research Grant

Payments shall be made to the Grantee as follows:

- a. Up to 50% of agreed funding within two months of commencement (advance),
- b. 50% (or the residual funds, whichever is greatest) on satisfactory completion and there are no outstanding requirements, i.e. all compulsory deliverables have been submitted, approved and are ready for publication (if applicable) e.g. the proof-reading stage has been completed.

The final payment shall be made to the Grantee following submission of an invoice via email to research@epa.ie, clearly quoting the EPA Project Code on the invoice.

All compulsory deliverables must be submitted in advance of the agreed project completion date, and the EPQ must be submitted within 28 days of the agreed project completion date. Grantees who do not comply with these requirements may have the final payment withheld and/or be deemed ineligible to apply for future EPA Research Programme funding.

Financial Management Systems

All accounts and financial management systems will be subject to verification and audit by the EPA and/or their appointed representative. These financial management systems must also be open to inspection by the Funding Department(s) and/or the Department of Finance or their nominees for the purpose of their financial control and audit procedures.

Tax Clearance

Grantees will be required to present a valid tax clearance certificate or Revenue Tax Clearance Access Number (TCAN) prior to grant award in accordance with Department of Finance regulations. Details of how to obtain a tax clearance certificate or TCAN can be found on the Revenue website at the following link: <https://www.revenue.ie/en/companies-and-charities/tax-clearance/index.aspx>.

Valid tax clearance certificates will be required before grant payments can be remitted.

Insurance

Grantees are also required to provide valid copies of Public and Employer's Liability insurance and Professional Indemnity insurance (where relevant) which must be updated annually. Evidence of compliance with relevant Health and Safety legislation may also be requested.

Section B: Project Management

Each project should have a single lead organisation with a nominated lead applicant who will coordinate the research and drive the overall objectives. The lead applicant has the following specific responsibilities:

- oversee the coordination of the various sub-projects to ensure that all deliverables are met,
- ensure compliance with progress reporting requirements,
- organise and ensure attendance of all relevant parties at all meetings required during the lifetime of the project,
- where a project steering committee has been established, ensure that any recommendations made by it are addressed,
- ensure effective dissemination/networking activities are undertaken. The dissemination and communication of research findings to stakeholders including policy makers, the research community and the public is a key objective for these projects, therefore personnel, time and budget should be made available for these tasks over the life of the project,
- organise and host communication/dissemination seminars throughout the project as appropriate,
- provide photos, logos etc. as required for communication and dissemination purposes,
- act as a focus for information exchange between researchers and policy makers to ensure well-founded scientific knowledge informs environmental policy.
- ensure that relevance to policy is included in the EPA Research Evidence Synthesis reports,
- ensure that data from the sub-projects is provided to participants where required and uploaded to an open access repository as agreed with the EPA.

Project Meetings

Progress meetings will be required including an initial project kick-off meeting and regular¹⁰ Steering Committee meetings as outlined below.

Kick-off Meeting

A kick-off meeting will be held as close as the project start date as possible and should be attended by the EPA Research Programme officer, Steering Committee members and the project team. The purpose is to formally initiate the project, to review the project plan (including any agreed revisions) and to discuss project management.

Steering Committee Meetings

The EPA, in consultation with the Grantee and (where applicable) Co-funding organisations, will establish a steering committee to provide advice to the project team and the EPA on the overall

¹⁰ Frequency will be determined by the duration of the project.

direction and approach of the project, and to provide an external view of the research. The Steering Committee will also advise on the contents and structure of the final deliverables.

The steering committee will typically comprise individuals with appropriate expertise and experience, including national experts and representatives from national organisations, relevant Government departments, Local Authorities and State/Public Bodies. The steering committee may also include one or more of the evaluators who reviewed the proposal during the evaluation process.

The lead applicant will be required to attend regular steering committee meetings, and present results from the research. These meetings will be organised by the EPA and the lead applicant.

Recommendations provided by the Steering Committee must be considered and implemented by the project team where possible.

Section C: Deviation from the Original Proposal

The Grantee should ensure that the project is not altered or adjusted without prior written consent from the EPA.

Project Time Extension

No Project Time Extension requests will be considered.

Travel Outside the EU or UK

The **prior** approval of the EPA is required for travel to any destination outside the EU or UK. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, will be limited to active participation in an international event (e. g. must be presenting a paper/poster, participating in agreed relevant training activities etc.) and will be limited to one person per research project team. Requests must be submitted via the [EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal](#) - approval will be at the discretion of the EPA.

Section D: Project Outputs and Deliverables

The following table lists the outputs and deliverables that may be required from your project (all deliverables marked as Compulsory must be submitted for all projects).

| Deliverable Type | EPA Requirement |
|--|------------------------------|
| EPA Research Evidence Synthesis Report | Compulsory for all projects. |
| End of Project Questionnaire (EPQ) | Compulsory for all projects |

| Deliverable Type | EPA Requirement |
|---|--|
| Technical Report | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| Policy Brief | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| 3-Year Post Completion Survey | Voluntary |
| Literature Review (for publication as an EPA Research Report) | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| Literature Review (not for publication as an EPA Research Report) | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| Interim Report (e.g. feasibility/scoping study) | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| Best Practice Guide | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| Models | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| Maps | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |
| Data and Technical Solutions* | Not compulsory unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is specified as a requirement in the Technical Description • It is listed as a deliverable for your project |

* Please note that the format of data and/or technical solutions (websites, developed software, database solutions etc.) must be agreed with the EPA to ensure that they can be installed on EPA infrastructure and maintained by EPA staff after the completion of the project. The EPA can supply a

current list of approved data formats and technology on request and the exact format of all outputs must be agreed with the EPA before development of same commences. All data outputs must have a comprehensive set of metadata and all technical solutions must be fully documented according to EPA requirements

Databases and significant datasets produced during the research project should be submitted to the EPA at the end of the project via the EPQ.

Deliverables will not be considered to have been submitted to the EPA if they have not been submitted the [EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal](#)

EPA Research Evidence Synthesis Report

Requirement: Compulsory

The EPA requires the lead applicant to submit a draft EPA Research Evidence Synthesis Report (20-30 pages). The report should be concise, include an executive summary, an introduction, an overview of the research or issue, an examination of the findings, and a concluding section that explains the policy recommendations and implications of the research. A short Abstract (max. 700 words) should also be provided. This will be used to describe the report when published on the EPA website. All reports should be submitted before the end date of the project, in accordance with the [EPA Research Project Communication](#) document available from the EPA website.

Review & Publication of EPA Research Evidence Synthesis Report

EPA Research Evidence Synthesis Report will be reviewed and should be revised by the project team in order to address any comments/recommendations. The EPA will sign-off on the report(s), once satisfied with the contents. If suitable for publication, the EPA Research Evidence Synthesis Report will be sent for proofing, formatting and publishing by the EPA. All comments/queries from the proof-readers must be responded to by the report author(s) within 28 days.

The authors are responsible for the proofing and formatting of any Technical Reports as these will not to be published by the EPA.

End of Project Questionnaire (EPQ)

Requirement: Compulsory for all project types

On completion of a project the lead applicant must complete and submit an End of Project Questionnaire within 28 days of the agreed completion date. The information provided will be used to demonstrate impact, value for money for environmental research and inform the future direction of the EPA Research Programme.

Technical Report

Requirement: Not compulsory unless specified as a requirement in the Technical Description or listed as a deliverable for the project

A Technical Report should detail the research undertaken and include a review of the current state of knowledge, data collection methods deployed, findings, analysis, conclusions and recommendations. Technical Reports will undergo the same peer-review process as EPA Research Reports and will be made available on request. They may, in some cases, be published by the EPA. Where relevant, applicants may include Technical Reports in their proposed outputs, and in certain cases, Technical Reports may be a specific requirement for a call topic - in such cases this will be clearly identified in the call topic description.

Policy Brief

Requirement: Not compulsory unless specified as a requirement in the Technical Description or listed as a deliverable for the project

A policy brief is a key tool to present research and recommendations to a non-specialised audience e.g. government policy makers. An effective policy brief should be concise, include an executive summary, an introduction, an overview of the research or issue, an examination of the findings, and a concluding section that explains the policy recommendations and implications of the research. Policy Briefs may undergo the same peer-review process as EPA Research Reports (e.g. if listed as a requirement in the Call Topic, or if recommended by the Steering Committee and agreed by the EPA) and will be made available on request. Where relevant, applicants may include Policy Briefs in their proposed outputs, and in certain cases, Policy Briefs may be a specific requirement for a call topic - in such cases this will be clearly identified in the call topic description.

3-Year Post Completion Survey

Requirement: Voluntary

Three years after the completion of a project the lead applicant will be asked to complete and submit a post-completion survey. The information provided will be used to demonstrate impact, value for money for environmental research and inform the future direction of the EPA Research Programme.

Literature Review (for publication as an EPA Research Report)

Requirement: Not compulsory unless specified as a requirement in the Technical Description or listed as a deliverable for the project

Literature Reviews should comprise a documentary review of available knowledge for a topic/subject area and provide a narrative that identifies knowledge gaps and informs research study goals or purpose. This type of literature review will undergo the same peer-review process as EPA Research Reports. Where relevant, applicants may include Literature Reviews in their proposed outputs, and in certain cases, Literature Reviews (for publication as an EPA Research publication) may be a specific requirement for a call topic - in such cases this will be clearly identified in the call topic description.

Literature Review (not for publication as an EPA Research Report)

Requirement: Not compulsory unless specified as a requirement in the Technical Description or listed as a deliverable for the project

Literature Reviews should comprise a documentary review of available knowledge for a topic/subject area and provide a narrative that identifies knowledge gaps and informs research study goals or purpose. This type of Literature Review will not be published by the EPA, however it can be published in a peer-reviewed journal. In such case, the published version should be submitted as part of the Project Progress Report or End of Project Questionnaire. Where relevant, applicants may include Literature Reviews in their proposed outputs, and in certain cases, Literature Reviews may be a specific requirement for a call topic - in such cases this will be clearly identified in the call topic description.

Interim Report (e.g. feasibility/scoping study)

Requirement: Not compulsory unless specified as a requirement in the Technical Description or listed as a deliverable for the project

An Interim Report provides information at a specified point in the research project (usually at the mid-term stage) to ensure optimum return on investment in the research. The report should outline what has been achieved to date and the steps needed to complete the entire project. Interim Reports will undergo the same peer-review process as EPA Research Reports, and will be made available on request. They may, in some cases, be published by the EPA. Where relevant, applicants may include Interim Reports in their proposed outputs, and in certain cases, Interim Reports may be a specific requirement for a call topic - in such cases this will be clearly identified in the call topic description.

Best Practice Guide

Requirement: Not compulsory unless specified as a requirement in the Technical Description or listed as a deliverable for the project

A Best Practice Guide should comprise a set of guidelines, ethics or ideas that represent the most efficient or prudent course of action in a given situation. Best Practice Guides will undergo the same peer-review process as EPA Research Reports and will be made available on request. They may, in some cases, be published by the EPA. Where relevant, applicants may include Best Practice Guides in their proposed outputs, and in certain cases, Best Practice Guides may be a specific requirement for a call topic - in such cases this will be clearly identified in the call topic description.

Knowledge Transfer, Communication, Dissemination and Publicity

Effective knowledge transfer, dissemination and communication of research findings to targeted stakeholders in support of timely and evidence-based environmental policy in Ireland is a key objective for projects funded under the EPA Research Programme.

The project team is required to engage in knowledge transfer activities, including (where relevant) knowledge collection, analysis and/or transfer meetings with key stakeholders. For projects awarded prior to 2022 while participation is not mandatory it is strongly encouraged. Training on the key principles of Knowledge Transfer may be offered, and project teams are encouraged to attend.

The project team is also encouraged to submit papers relating to the project to peer-reviewed journals and to present findings at national and international conferences. Electronic copies of accepted papers, posters, etc. should be provided to the EPA as part of interim and final reporting requirements.

The requirements set out in the EPA Research Project Communication document must be adhered to, including the requirements for submission and prior review of media releases, the use of disclaimers, logos, acknowledgements and Notes to the Editor. The [EPA Research Project Communication](#) document is available to download from the EPA website.

PART 3: Terms and Conditions for Support of Grant Awards

Section A: Funding

Funding is provided on a discretionary basis by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the Grantee. The term 'Grantee' is defined in the Notification of Award of Research Grant and includes the lead applicant and lead organisation. It means each of them separately and all of them together or any number of them collectively.

The EPA shall not be under any obligation to provide any funding to the Grantee. Where the EPA commences funding a project, it undertakes to continue to provide funding in accordance with the proposed schedule of funding, subject to the following exceptions:

- a. If the EPA is dissatisfied with the performance of the project by the Grantee, it may at its absolute discretion decline to continue funding the project.
- b. If the funding that the EPA receives from the State to enable it to provide funding to projects (including this project) is discontinued or reduced, the EPA may cease funding to certain projects; and in particular, if it is so reduced, the EPA may elect not to continue funding some projects, even if it continues to fund other projects.
- c. For co-funded projects, the EPA may elect not to continue funding a Project, in the event that the co-funding body is not in a position to meet its funding obligations.
- d. For co-funded projects the EPA shall not be responsible for making any payments due by the co-funder but not made by them.
- e. The EPA reserves the right not to continue funding a project in circumstances where grantees have been successfully prosecuted by the EPA.
- f. If the EPA ceases to fund the project for any reason, the Grantee shall not be entitled to recover from the EPA or from the State any funding which would have been due had the EPA continued to fund the project. Nor shall the Grantee be entitled to any indemnity or damages of any kind from the EPA or the State.
- g. If the Grantee does not comply/has not complied with the EPA's requirements for grantees to ensure satisfactory completion of a project, the EPA may discontinue funding and decline to provide further funding for future projects. The EPA's requirements for Grantees are set out in Part 2 of this document. Where funding is payable in arrears, the EPA shall not be obliged to provide funding where its requirements have not been complied with. The EPA undertakes

that it will not discontinue funding or decline further funding simply because it disagrees with the results of the project.

- h. It shall be the responsibility of the Grantee to satisfy the EPA that the project is proceeding satisfactorily and that the Grant is being used in the most effective manner. If the EPA is not satisfied, it may discontinue funding and decline to provide further funding for future projects until such time as the Grantee satisfies outstanding issues. If the EPA is not satisfied, it shall notify the Grantee of the reasons why funding has been discontinued and shall give the Grantee an opportunity to address the issues identified.
- i. All funding provided is inclusive of VAT, if it is applicable.

In addition to the provisions above the EPA may discontinue funding if any of the following events occur:

- i. There is a material change in the legal status of the Grantee, such material change to include but not to be confined to the Grantee entering into liquidation whether compulsory or voluntary, the appointment of a receiver over all or any part of the assets or undertakings of the Grantee and (where appropriate) the Grantee becoming subject to the Bankruptcy Laws;
- ii. A distress or execution is levied or served upon any of the property of the Grantee and is not discharged within 30 days;
- iii. The EPA is satisfied that the project has encountered fundamental and undue delay or that the project has ceased;
- iv. Where the Lead Applicant is convicted of a criminal offence.

Section B: EPA Requirements for Grantees

- 1. The Grantee shall comply with the following requirements:
 - a. Carry out the project in accordance with the financial rules of the programme (contained in the Parts 1 and 2 of this document) and in accordance with the agreed budget and research proposal for the project;
 - b. Designate a lead organisation and lead applicant for the project. The lead applicant shall be responsible for the management of the project and reporting of technical and financial progress (see Part 3, Section C);
 - c. Supply any information requested by the EPA for the purposes of ensuring that these requirements are complied with and comply with any written request or direction received from the EPA concerning the proper management of the project;
 - d. Ensure that the effective control of the project is not changed without obtaining prior written consent from the EPA;
 - e. Ensure that the project is not altered or adjusted without obtaining prior written consent from the EPA;
 - f. Submit to the EPA, if requested, prior to commencement of the project, an up-to-date tax clearance certificate from the Office of the Revenue Commissioners;
 - g. Submit to the EPA, if requested, prior to the commencement of the project up-to-date copies of Public and Employers Liability and Professional Indemnity insurance policies, to enable the EPA to verify that there is no risk that the funding provided will

- have to be used to meet any claim against the Grantee or any person involved in the project;
- h. Ensure that there is no other funding provided to the project other than that provided by the EPA directly or through a mutually agreed co-funding arrangement;
 - i. Allow the EPA or its appointed representative access to the Grantees premises at all reasonable times for the purpose of inspection or monitoring of the project;
 - j. Permit the EPA or its appointed representative to inspect the project including the financial and payroll records of the project at any reasonable time;
 - k. Make reference to the support received from the EPA and the Irish Government, in any publicity or promotional activities relating to the project and respect copyright laws in any publication;
 - l. Where project outputs include data and/or technical solutions (websites, developed software, database solutions etc.) then the format of same must be agreed with the EPA to ensure that they can be installed on EPA infrastructure and maintained by EPA staff after the completion of the project. The EPA can supply a current list of approved data formats and technology on request and the exact format of all outputs must be agreed with the EPA before development of same commences. All data outputs must have a comprehensive set of metadata and all technical solutions must be fully documented according to EPA requirements.
 - m. Where relevant, any biodiversity occurrence data collected as part of the research project must be lodged/archived with the National Biodiversity Data Centre (<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/>)
 - n. Details of all EPA funded water related research projects must be added to Ireland's Water Research Infrastructure¹¹ database where appropriate. <https://eparesearch.epa.ie/droplet/>
2. Comply with dissemination and communication requirements as described in this document and the [EPA Research Project Communication](#) document. All projects must comply with the EPA's policy on Open Data and Open Access.

Section C: Reporting, Monitoring and Accounting

- The Grantee shall maintain proper books of accounts and records in relation to all aspects of the project. The books of accounts and records shall be:
 - distinct from those concerning other activities of the Grantee, and
 - retained for a minimum period of three years after the conclusion of the EPA Research Programme 2021-2030 or seven years after the year in which the expenditure is incurred whichever is the greater.

The Grantee shall keep such books of accounts and records available on demand, together with such other documents as may be required by the EPA, for the purposes of any financial or physical verification or evaluation of progress or performance. The Grantee shall ensure that an adequate financial management system is in place for the purposes of vouching expenditure recorded on the Cost Statements submitted to the EPA. It should also be noted

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/european-research-infrastructures_en

that normal accounting rules and procedures require that all financial records and information should be retained for seven years after the financial period to which they relate.

- The Grantee shall comply with final reporting requirements as set out in Part 2 of this document. It shall be the responsibility of the Grantee to satisfy the EPA that the Grant is being employed in the most effective manner. If the EPA is not satisfied, it may decline to continue funding the project in accordance with section A of these Terms and Conditions

The EPA may, alter or amend any reporting or monitoring provision where the EPA believes the proper management of the research (including the proper supervision of the project) so requires. The EPA will notify the Grantee in such circumstances.

Section D: Payment of the grant

1. Payments shall be made to the Grantees, as described in the Part 2 of this document. Payments will only be made in respect of eligible costs as described in Part 1 of this document.
2. All payments shall be made to the lead organisation as agent for the other Grantees.
3. Where tax clearance certificates are required, no payment will be made unless an up-to-date certificate from the Office of the Revenue Commissioners (or other relevant authority) has been lodged by the Grantee with the EPA.
4. No liability shall attach to the relevant Minister(s), the Funding Department(s), the State or the EPA or its appointed representatives, in respect of any delay, howsoever caused, in any payment to the Grantee pursuant to this Agreement.

Section E: Project Completion/Termination

1. Subject to Section F of these Terms and Conditions, the project shall finish on the date specified in the Notification of Award of Research Grant, unless extended beyond that date by agreement between the Grantee and the EPA. There shall be no extension without the prior written consent of the EPA.
2. Normally, action by the EPA to suspend or terminate a research grant will be taken only after the Grantee has been informed by the EPA of any deficiency on the part of the Grantee or the lead applicant and given an opportunity to correct it. However, the EPA may immediately suspend or terminate the research grant without notice when it reasonably believes that such action is required to protect the interest of the EPA, the research programme or the research grant. Suspension or termination of a research grant shall be notified in writing to the Grantee with a copy also issued to the organisation's research office will take effect on the date indicated in the notification.
3. The Grantee is required to submit within 42 days after the effective date of termination, all required reports and deliverables relating to the work carried out up to that date. In the absence of receipt of such documents within the above time-limits, the EPA may determine not to make any further payments in relation to the research grant. Where a project is terminated the-final payment will not be made.
4. In the event of a project being terminated, the EPA reserves the right to consider the Grantee to be ineligible to apply for future funding for a 2-year period starting from the termination

date of the project. However, the individual may assist as an unpaid advisor on specific projects under the EPA Research Programme.

5. Should the principal investigator be unwilling or unable, for any reason whatsoever to continue their involvement in the project (including but not limited to retirement, ill-health, resignation, dismissal or termination of contract), the lead organisation shall notify the EPA which shall have the option to terminate the project and grant. Alternatively, the EPA may agree to the appointment of a new principal investigator.
6. Should the principal investigator cease to be employed by the lead organisation, the EPA and the lead organisation may agree the appointment of a new principal investigator or, in default of agreement, terminate the project and grant. Alternatively, the EPA may instead, with the agreement of the lead organisation, arrange for the project to be completed by the principal investigator and / or his new employer under the terms set out in this Agreement.
7. If work does not begin on the project on the agreed start date, as stated in the Notification of Award of Research Grant, the project will be cancelled, and the advance payment must be reimbursed in full to the EPA.
8. In all matters pertaining to the termination of an EPA grant award the EPA's decision will be final.

Section F: Notices

Any Notices required to be given to or served on the Grantee, shall be deemed to be duly given to or served upon the Grantee if provided in writing (including electronic correspondence).

Section G: Transfer and Assignment

The Grantee shall not transfer or assign directly or indirectly any portion of the terms and conditions without the prior written consent of the EPA.

Section H: Indemnity

The EPA is merely providing funding for the project and is not assuming any liability for its execution.

Nothing in the Terms and Conditions of funding for the EPA Research Programme shall constitute a partnership or joint venture or establish a relationship of agency between the Parties hereto, nor shall the Research Grant Award, or the operation thereof or the provision of any services by the EPA, the Lead Applicant, the Research Team or the Research Body be construed as evidence of any contract of employment between the EPA and any member of the Research Team or any servant or agent of the Research Body, which is expressly denied.

Neither the Lead Applicant nor any member of the Research Team, nor any servant or agent of the Research Body shall be, nor in any way represent himself to be an agent of the EPA, and none of them shall have any authority to enter into any obligation on behalf of the EPA or to bind the EPA in any way, which is expressly denied.

Section I: Data Protection

It is acknowledged that Personal Data may be submitted to the EPA by the Grantee as part of a research programme project. Each of the EPA and the Lead Organisation shall be a separate Data Controller with respect to such Personal Data. This means that each party determines the purposes and means of its respective processing of the Shared Personal Data.

Each party shall ensure that it processes Shared Personal Data on the basis of one or more of the legal grounds set out in Article 6 and Article 9 of GDPR, for the purposes of carrying out, administering and/or publicising the research programme and its results as described in this document and/or the EPA Privacy Policy. The Lead Organisation shall, in particular, not upload or provide Personal Data to the EPA (including via relevant websites or portals) unless it has a proper legal basis to do so. Where the Lead Organisation is uploading or sharing Personal Data on behalf of a third party, it shall ensure that such third party has a proper legal basis for the sharing of such Personal Data with the third party and the EPA.

The Lead Organisation shall ensure that the EPA Privacy Policy has been shared with, and accepted by, each third-party project participant and applicable individuals with respect to Personal Data that may be shared with the EPA.

Each party shall be individually responsible, as a sole Data Controller, for its own processing of the Shared Personal Data pursuant to and in connection with an EPA funded project. This means each party determines the purposes and means of its respective processing of the Shared Personal Data. The Grantees must fully comply with their respective obligations under Data Protection Legislation. The Lead Organisation shall be responsible for ensuring that relevant Data Subjects have been provided with the information referred to in Article 13 of GDPR.

Each party will inform the other of any requests from Data Subjects regarding rectification or erasure of Shared Personal Data, or restriction of or objection to the processing of Shared Personal Data that are relevant to the other parties. Each party shall, to the extent that such a request affects another party's processing of Shared Personal Data, provide reasonable assistance to such other party to enable compliance with Data Protection Legislation.

Each party shall notify the other immediately if it becomes aware or suspects a Personal Data Breach which is likely to affect or invoke another party's obligations under Data Protection Legislation. The notifying party shall document all Personal Data Breaches in accordance with Data Protection Legislation and fully cooperate with the other party to ensure compliance with Data Protection Legislation. All parties shall use reasonable endeavours to mitigate any damage suffered by a Data Subject.

For the purposes of this Section I of these Terms and Conditions, the below terms shall be defined as set out below:

Data Controller has the meaning set out in Data Protection Legislation;

Data Protection Legislation the Data Protection Acts 1988 - 2018 and Directive 95/46/EC, any other applicable law or regulation relating to the processing of personal data and to privacy, including the E-Privacy Directive and the EC (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 General Data Protection Regulation (EU)

2016/679 (GDPR) (and laws implementing or supplementing the GDPR and/or the E-Privacy Regulations);

Data Subject has the meaning set out in the Data Protection Legislation;

Personal Data has the meaning set out in the Data Protection Legislation;

Shared Personal Data means the Personal Data shared between the parties as part of a research grant programme.

/*Section J: Other

All references herein to the EPA shall mean the Environmental Protection Agency, its employees, servants and agents. Where the EPA wishes to inspect the premises of any Grantee but does not undertake this task itself, it shall provide a letter of appointment to any person acting on its behalf, and such person shall present that letter of appointment to the grantee as proof that he or she is acting on behalf of the EPA.

PART 4: Other Information

Section A: Intellectual Property

The EPA Research Programme funds not-for-profit research intended to generate knowledge for public good purposes and to support timely and evidence-based environmental policy in Ireland. As such the EPA expects that outputs / findings should be widely disseminated and made publicly available. A data repository as agreed by the EPA should be used for this purpose.

On completion of a research project, Lead Applicants are granted an embargo of 6 months (or 12 months in the case of the social sciences or humanities) of exclusive access to the datasets needed to validate the results presented in their scientific publications before they are required to upload them to a data repository as agreed by the EPA. This embargo does not apply in the case of datasets requested specifically for the purpose of EPA approved knowledge transfer activities that are intended to support evidence-based policy decisions in Government departments. In such cases the datasets may be shared with key policy stakeholders on a confidential basis during the embargo period. Lead Applicants will in these instances have the opportunity to directly present the data to ensure proper use and interpretation.

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

Section B: 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 all funded research to abide by the guidelines included therein. The EPA expressly encourages that EPA grantees, and associated project teams, undertake relevant research integrity training on a regular basis.

A guidance document to help researchers reinforce responsible research conduct in their research collaborations has been published by the Research Integrity National Forum and is available to download from the [National Research Integrity Forum webpage on the Irish Universities Association website](#) (see section entitled Key Outputs of the Forum).

Section C: 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.

Section D: Personal Information

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.

Section E: Open Access of Publications and Data

Previous EPA Research programmes have encouraged an open access policy. In 2019 the EPA endorsed the [National Framework on the Transition to an Open Research Environment](#) which is the first step in a process to create a [National Action Plan for the Transition to an Open Research Environment in Ireland](#). The EPA is a participant in the National Open Research Forum (NORF) and to that end will implement recommendations from the action plan once these have been published.

At present the EPA's policy on Open Access and Open Data is as follows:

Open Access

All projects funded by the EPA Research Programme are required to ensure open access to all peer-reviewed publications resulting from EPA funding. This must be done by depositing your peer-reviewed manuscript in an open access repository as agreed with the EPA. You are also encouraged to publish in reputable open access journals. Please note however, the communications budget may only be used for Gold Open Access in exceptional circumstances, subject to prior approval by the EPA. Expenditure on Gold Open Access that has not had the prior approval of the EPA will be deemed ineligible.

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 a 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 a 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 a data repository as agreed with the EPA, to the bibliographic metadata that identify the deposited publication, and that must include:

- The terms "Environmental Protection Agency" and "EPA Research Programme";
- The name of the pillar or hub and EPA Research project number;
- The publication date, and length of embargo period (an embargo of 6 months is acceptable or 12 months for the social sciences or humanities), and
- 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.

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

All final versions of publications and data should also be submitted via the EPA's Grant Management and Application Portal as part of the reporting requirements of the Programme.

Section F: Ethical and Gender Issues

Gender Issues

The principles of the EU gender mainstreaming policy apply to the programme. To this end lead applicant organisations shall be required to report the ratio of genders 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.

As part of progress reporting requirements applicants will be asked to outline how gender equity has been taken into account in the research project team. To this end, applicants are encouraged to have balanced membership of the genders in the 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 have complied with the timelines set out in the [Higher Education Authority Statement on Athena Swan Charter in Ireland](#).

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

Ethical Issues

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 from the beginning of the award, evidence of ethical approval will need to be provided to the EPA before funding can be awarded.

Section G: Further Information

Any queries relating to the contents of this document should be addressed to research@epa.ie.

Appendix I – Glossary of Terms

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| Approval Deadline | Means the deadline by which Research Proposal Authorisers must confirm organisational support of the proposal and agreement with the Lead Applicant Declarations. |
| Finance Office Contact | Means the person (or persons) within the Lead Organisation authorised to assist with the financial reporting requirements of your project, and other financial-related requests. |
| Grantees | Means the Lead Applicant and Lead Organisation. It means each of them separately and all of them together or any number of them collectively. |
| Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) | For the purpose of the EPA Research Programme, an HEI on the island of Ireland is an organisation listed on the following webpage: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> https://hea.ie/higher-education-institutions/ Or (for Northern Ireland): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Queen’s University Belfast Ulster University |
| Lead Applicant | Means the person who creates the application and is responsible for ensuring all reporting and deliverable requirements are met. |
| Lead Organisation | Means the organisation that is host to the Lead Applicant. |
| Private Small Company | For the purpose of the EPA Research Programme, a Private Small Company is one where: <p>Number of employees = 1 to 49 and either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual turnover is less than €10m or Annual balance sheet is less than €10m |
| Private Medium Company | For the purpose of the EPA Research Programme, a Private Medium Company is one where: <p>Number of employees = 50 to 249 and either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual turnover is less than €50m or Annual balance sheet is less than €43m |
| Private Large Company | For the purpose of the EPA Research Programme, a Private Large Company is one where: <p>Number of employees = 250 or above and either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual turnover is greater than or equal to €50m or Annual balance sheet is greater than or equal to €43m |

| Term | Definition |
|---|--|
| Project Team Member | Means any person working on the research project, including Lead applicant. |
| Research Performing Organisation (RPO) | <p>For the purpose of the EPA Research Programme, a Research Performing Organisation (RPO) means a legal entity engaged in publicly funded research which represents at least 50% of their annual operational capacity. The organisation must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Possess an existing in-house capacity to carry out research that extends and enhances the Irish research base in the environmental sectors and be able to demonstrate an independent capability to undertake and lead research programmes, as demonstrated by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sufficient high-quality current research capacity, b. A track record of staff that have led or co-led innovative research projects, including directing postdoctoral researchers over the previous five years; c. Sufficient financial support for research at the organisational level to ensure the availability of essential infrastructure. 2. Ensure that the results of any research funded by the EPA are made publicly available at no cost, subject to the provisions of the National IP Protocol. <p>If the status of the eligible organisation changes then the eligibility to apply to our programmes would require re-consideration by the EPA.</p> <p>For the avoidance of doubt any other RPO not meeting this definition will be assessed against the Private Company criteria as either small, medium or large and the prevailing funding rates available will apply.</p> <p>The EPA’s determination of the status of any applicant organisation will be final.</p> <p>Note: For the purpose of the EPA Research Programme, HEIs and Public/State Bodies are excluded from the definition of RPOs and are referred to separately in this document.</p> |
| Research Proposal Authoriser | Means the person (or persons) authorised on behalf of the Lead Organisation to confirm support of the application and agreement with the Lead Applicant’s declarations. |
| Submission Deadline | Means the deadline by which Lead Applicants must submit proposals for review and approval by their Research Proposal Authorisers. |