UCD Support and Deadlines

Call Management
This document is designed to support and enhance preparation for UCD applicants submitting proposals to the EPA Research Call 2022. **It should not be distributed to others outside of UCD.** It provides advice and the institutional information required for application. It must be used in conjunction with the following documents:

1. EPA Research Call 2022 Technical Description
2. 2022 EPA Research Guidelines and Terms & Conditions
3. EPA Research Programme 2021-2030 Evaluation Process
4. EPA FAQs

Deadlines		
5pm 25 May 2022	**Mandatory Budget and Application Review**	Submission of the completed UCD budget template and budget justification for approval. UCD Research will review proposals for structure and contents issues, or gaps related to the evaluation criteria. Full draft proposals should be submitted via our online form.
5pm 25 May 2022	**Technical Content FAQs**	All queries MUST be submitted to research@epa.ie.
5pm 1 June 2022	**Deadline for Application Proposals to EPA**	Institutional endorsement is required by the EPA to complete the application process. UCD completes this final step within 7 days after the applicant submission date.
UCD Research strongly recommends that applicants get feedback on the scientific/scholarly aspects of their proposal from peers in direct and closely adjacent areas of their projects.		

In the 5-step approach below we guide you through what documents you will need for each stage of the process to have a successful application.

Step 1: EPA Submission System

First step is to ensure that you are registered on the EPA submission system. This will enable you to review the application, download the templates required and complete your application for submission. Instructions on how to register and use the system can be found on the EPA Online Grant Management and Application Portal System User Guides.
- Applications must be made online at https://epa.smartsimple.ie
- Additional information can be found on the EPA website

Step 2: Scope Summary

The EPA plans to commit up to €11.7 million for new research projects, the funding will be provided under the four EPA Research 2030 interconnected thematic research hubs:

Thematic Research
- Addressing Climate Change Evidence Needs
- Facilitating a Green and Circular Economy
- Delivering a Healthy Environment
- Protecting and Restoring our Natural Environment

Familiarize yourself with the EPA Research Call Technical Description Document to decide on your Project Type, Funding, Call Topic and Content with special attention to the scope for each call content.

Project Types and Funding
Choose your project type and funding amount from the list below.
- Desk Studies – 6 to 12 months up to €120,000
- Medium Scale Projects – 24 to 48 months, up to €500,000
- Large Scale Projects – 36 to 48 months, up to €1,000,000
- Research Fellowships – 24 to 36 months, up to €300,000
- Doctoral Scholarship – 48 months, up to €110,000

TIPs

Project based awards:
- All projects must be submitted by the Lead Applicant and the Lead Applicant's organisation must be located on the island of Ireland.
- Do not exceed maximum project duration or request excess funding per the call topic content in the Technical Description Document or your application will be deemed invalid.

Research based awards: Research Doctoral Scholarship and Research Fellowship.
- Doctoral Scholarship awards must be submitted by the academic supervisor for the duration of the scholarship.
- Research fellowship award:
  o Must be filled at post-doctorate researcher level as defined by the IUA Salary Guidelines
  o Must be submitted by the individual fellow and host HEI/RPO
  o Must be supervised by the host with a supervisor with required experience for the length of the project
  o Review further details on the calls in the Technical Description Document

Ensure your proposal is building on findings and recommendations from past and current research projects where relevant.

Step 3: EPA Guidelines and Terms & Conditions

Review the EPA Research Guidelines and Terms & Conditions document.
- EPA Research Guidelines and Terms & Conditions covers the application and submission process, information on the required templates, eligibility, budget and financial rules, project outputs and deliverables.
- Next, applicants need to choose a Call Topic from the 48 topics on pp. 4-8 of the Technical Description Document. Up to one award is expected for each of the topics included in the call.

Call Topics and Content fall under the following areas in the Technical Description Document:
- Addressing Climate Change Evidence Needs (16 topics, pp. 9-27)

- Facilitating a Green and Circular Economy (10 topics, pp. 28-39)
- Delivering a Healthy Environment (11 topics, pp. 40-56)
- Protecting and Restoring our Natural Environment (11 topics, pp. 57-70)

Tip: Make sure you address the scope of the Call Topic that is written in the call content, or your application will be deemed invalid.

Step 4: Review Required Templates

Review and familiarise yourself with all content needed to complete the EPA required templates which can be found when you login to https://epa.smartsimple.ie/.

The EPA Required Templates are downloaded from the EPA Online System where you will submit your proposal. If you do not use these required templates your application will be invalid. The EPA Required Templates are:
- Work Package Summary Tables
- Project Description Template
- Budget Template

UCD required Budget Template
- UCD's Budget Template for the EPA Call is on our Pre-Award Portal Page. Submit this completed template, together with your justification and draft application/other documents through our online form for review and approval by **5pm 25 May 2022**.
- Budget & Financial Eligibility Rules (see EPA Guidelines Terms & Conditions document, pp. 10-21),
- Refer to the Prepare and Approve your Budget on the UCD Research Portal for reference in the preparation of your budget.

Your budget and all templates and proposal should be submitted through our online form for review and approval. For more information on templates and budget information review the EPA Guidelines and Terms & Conditions pp. 7-21 for templates and budget information.

Step 5: Call Evaluation Process and Criteria

Review and understand the EPA Research Call Evaluation Process to have the best chance for your proposal to receive the top evaluation marks.

- The call evaluation criteria and rating system is on pp. 4-5 of the EPA Research Call Evaluation Process document. Reviewing these pages will ensure that your proposal addresses key areas of evaluation and includes information that EPA are looking for.

The evaluation process has 2 steps.
Step 1 – proposals are reviewed under the criterion with subcategories on pp. 4-5 of the EPA Research Call Evaluation Process.
    1) Excellence
    2) Communication, Dissemination and Knowledge Transfer to Deliver Impact
    3) Implementation

TIPs

1. Proposals should address at least one of the Call Topics in the Technical Description Documents.
2. Outputs of all projects **must** build on recently completed and existing research and other relevant information.
3. To receive full evaluation marks your proposal must successfully address all relevant aspects of the criterion under each section on P4 of EPA Research Call Evaluation Process.

Step 2 – short-listed proposals are reviewed by National Overview Committees who make recommendations to

the EPA and agree on the final ranking.

Proposals which are shortlisted following Step 1 of the Evaluation Process are scored against the following criteria (scoring matrices, p. 8 Evaluation Process document):

- **National Overview** (added value, expected impacts and knowledge transfer of the proposed research project and how the outputs will provide evidence to inform environmental policies and considerations)
- **Past Performance** (Grantees are required to comply with the EPA's requirements for Grantees to ensure satisfactory completion of a project)

See pp. 7-9 Evaluation Process document to see how final score is derived.

It is essential that in their proposal, applicants clearly demonstrate 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 policies and the protection of the environment. Applicants must clearly demonstrate how their proposed research will provide the evidence to support environmental policy in Ireland, in terms of identifying pressures, informing policy, and developing solutions.

Expected Outputs
Review and familiarize yourself with the expected outputs in Section D pp. 28-33 of the EPA Guidelines and Terms & Conditions.

Where project outputs include data and/or technical solutions (websites, developed software, database solutions etc.), format must be agreed with the EPA to ensure that they can be installed on EPA infrastructure and maintained by EPA staff after 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 commences. All data outputs must have a comprehensive set of metadata and all technical solutions must be fully documented according to EPA requirements.

Queries may be emailed to EPA at research@epa.ie.

Other areas to review
Open Access and Open Data
All projects must comply with the EPA's Open Access Policy available from the EPA Strategies and Policies document which also covers:

- Gender Strategy
- Maternity, Paternity, Parent's and Adoptive Leave Policy
- Appeals Policy

Demonstrate relevance to national environmental research priorities and Call Technical Description. Ensure you refer to the relevant policy documents below as well as the Technical Description for your call. Also ensure your references are as obvious as possible to aid the reviewers in evaluating your proposal.

- ✓ EPA Research 2030 (10-year research programme 2021-2030)
- ✓ National Environmental Policy Context for Sustainability
    - o e.g., Towards a Resource Efficient Ireland - 2014, Healthy Ireland, National Biodiversity Action Plan - 2017, National Planning Framework, Our Sustainable Future: Ireland's Framework for Sustainable Development, National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy
- ✓ National Environmental Policy Context for Climate
    - o e.g., Goals of the Paris Agreement 2015, National Mitigation Plan (DCCAE, 2017), National Adaptation Framework (NAF) (DCCAE, 2018), National Clean Air Strategy (publication of final version by DCCAE is imminent) and State of the Environment Report
- ✓ National Environmental Policy Context for Water

- o e.g., Water Framework Directive; River Basin Management Plans, State of the Environment Report
- ✓ Implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Information you may require for other areas of your application:

Describe how the personnel involved in the proposed research project will be trained in the context of Research Integrity.

Integrity can be defined as being truthful and living up to professional standards, in practice it means that research is conducted according to established rules, regulations, guidelines, or professional codes. The researcher must only pursue research questions that are designed to contribute to knowledge, be committed to the pursuit and protection of truth, and rely only on research methods which are appropriate to the discipline, training and experience of the researcher.

UCD is committed to promoting the performance of research to the highest standards of professionalism and rigour by its staff and students, and to the accuracy and integrity of the research record in publications and elsewhere. UCD is also a member of the Irish Universities Association's Working Group on Research Integrity. The UCD Office of Research Ethics provides access to Epigeum online courses on Research Integrity tailored to the needs of a variety of disciplines. All UCD research personnel can receive tailored Epigeum training in research integrity.

Describe how the gender dimension is considered in the scope of your proposed research.

Gender roles and identities play a crucial role in sustainable management. Perceptions, needs and use of technologies, tools and services, as well as risk perception and impacts, are gendered. Refer to the Gender in EU Research website for tips on how to address this question.

Demonstrate how gender balance will be fostered within the proposed research team.

Applicants are required to report the ratio of males to females working on projects. Applicants are asked to take action to encourage females to take a lead role in research projects and to demonstrate that they have considered 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.

Presenting an acceptable gender balance within the project team will reinforce women's participation in decision-making at all levels within the project. Additionally, a balanced approach will assist to raise awareness within organisations on how equal opportunities and fair working conditions contribute to a satisfying balance between work and private life. You may refer to UCD Athena-Swan programme.

Policy Compliance

The University is fully compliant with health and safety legislation, including risk assessment policy. The UCD Safety, Insurance, Operational Risk and Compliance office is available to assist in statutory compliance with health and safety legislation and environmental legislation.

We will undertake all research according to codes of good practice including the UCD Code of Good Practice in Research, obtaining ethical approval where required. The UCD Research Ethics Office ensures that research activities in UCD are carried out to the highest standards and in a way which respects the dignity, rights, and welfare of subjects, and which minimises risk to subjects, researchers, third parties, and to the University itself. Training in research integrity is available to all UCD researchers.

Recruitment will be conducted following UCD standards in recruitment policy. The project team will comply with requirements of the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000. UCD has a published policy on equal opportunities employment policy and code of practice for individuals with disabilities. All UCD researchers are insured by UCD for public liability, employer's liability, and professional indemnity.