

Center for Climate Impact and Action (CLIMACT) Starting Grant

Call for proposals

Introduction

The [Center for Climate Impact and Action \(CLIMACT\)](#) is a joint center between the École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and the University of Lausanne (UNIL) designed to foster interdisciplinary and interinstitutional research and implementation activities that address the social, scientific and technological challenges associated with the transition to a sustainable future. Projects funded through the CLIMACT Starting Grant should be aimed at proposing to societal stakeholders novel and systemic approaches to deal with current issues in society and technology, associating researchers from both UNIL and EPFL.

Program mission

Through an annual call for projects, CLIMACT provides competitive grants to support new seed research endeavors with the potential to grow into full-scale interdisciplinary research projects. This fund is thus designed to foster novel collaborative research efforts, which will explore new ideas, solutions and communication methods in order to maximise societal impact.

Call for proposals

- A call for proposals is now open, with a deadline set on **1 September 2021 (17:00 CEST)**.
- Applications must involve at least one investigator from an EPFL research group and one investigator from an UNIL research group. Partnerships are encouraged, without allowing for the partners to ask for funding (implementation partners).
- Funding is available for 12-month projects. The maximum amount that can be requested is CHF 50'000 per project.
- The project starting date must be **1 November 2021**.

Requirements

The requirements are:

- The project is proposed by an interdisciplinary team made up of at least one researcher from each of the institutions (EPFL and UNIL).
- The project falls within the scope of CLIMACT's mission.
- Applicants must be employed as professors, senior scientists (maîtres d'enseignement et de recherche – MERs) or scientific collaborators (holding a PhD at application time) at EPFL or UNIL for the full duration of the project (12 months).
- Adjunct professors ("professeurs titulaires"), MERs and other scientific collaborators (holding a PhD at application time) who are not financially independent must include a letter of commitment from their host professor or head of unit, indicating that he or she:
 - guarantees the feasibility of the project for its full duration using the means of his/her unit;
 - takes administrative responsibility for all EPFL or UNIL personnel financed by the project, in particular with respect to any induced costs or additional resources needed and not covered by the grant.

- Each project team designates a main applicant who is responsible for coordinating the research work. This responsible (main) applicant is a professor, senior scientist (MER) or scientific collaborator (holding a PhD at the application time) of one of the two institutions.
- Researchers or groups of researchers can propose multiple projects but only the highest marked proposal can be granted.
- Applicants may not be part of the evaluation committee of the CLIMACT Starting Grant.

Applicants who contravene the rules of research integrity or good scientific practice will not be considered for funding from the CLIMACT Starting Grant.

Eligible costs

Eligible direct costs include and are limited to:

- Personnel costs for personnel specifically hired to work on the project, i.e. doctoral students¹, postdoctoral researchers, and other employees (e.g. technical assistants);
- Research funds: i.e. consumables, direct costs of infrastructure use, open research data costs, open access publication costs, expenses of third parties (subcontracting) as well as travel, conference, and workshop costs. Note that subcontracting expenses cannot exceed 10% of the total direct costs.

Funding from the CLIMACT Starting Grant cannot be used to cover already existing (e.g. administrative) services, equipment, and/or the salary of the grantee(s).

No overheads shall be paid on the direct costs of the CLIMACT Starting Grant projects.

How to apply

All required documents must be submitted in English via calls@climact.ch before the submission deadline of **1 September 2021** (17:00 CEST).

Project proposal	This template must be used for the project proposal.
Budget	This template must be used for the budget.
Letter of support from the host professor or head of unit (if applicable)	Any applicant who is not a professor or a financially independent adjunct professor/MER must provide a letter of support from his/her host professor or head of unit.
CV (including major scientific achievements) and list of publications	All applicants must submit a CV (including major scientific achievements) and a list of publications according to the SNSF guidelines . No other format than the one laid out by the SNSF will be accepted.
Ethical issues questionnaire	The responsible applicant will be required to fill out the ethical issues form .

¹ Applicants must commit to employing doctoral students until completion of their PhD.

Applications will only be considered if they strictly meet the guidelines, notably with respect to length and format.

Evaluation

Each application will be evaluated and scored by a five-member committee appointed by CLIMACT and comprised of independent experts, based on the following criteria:

1. Excellence – weight 0.5
 - a. Novelty and innovativeness (weight – 0.4):
 - i. To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches and development between and/or across research areas)?
 - b. Balance and complementarity of the teams (weight – 0.6):
 - i. To what extent does the interdisciplinary and interinstitutional approach of the project go beyond what the individual applicants could achieve alone?
2. Implementation – weight 0.2
 - a. To what extent are the proposed activities and working arrangements appropriate to achieve the goals of the project?
 - b. To what extent are the proposed timescales and resources necessary and properly justified?
3. Impact – weight 0.3
 - a. To what extent will the project lead to new technical and/or scientific developments?
 - b. To what extent will the project benefit society directly and immediately?

The final decision will be made by this ad hoc committee.

Decision and start of the projects

Decisions will be announced in October 2021 and granted applicants will have to start their project on 1 November 2021.

Funding will be disbursed at the start of the project once the responsible applicant has complied with all administrative, including a grant agreement, a collaboration agreement, and ethical requirements.

Reporting

Granted responsible applicants will be required to submit:

- A Data Management Plan (DMP) within the first half of the funding period;
- A final financial report prepared by the financial services of each institution as well as an Excel summary table based on these financial reports;
- A final technical report on the activities carried out, deviation from the initial proposal, results attained and the future prospects (including submissions to funding agencies).

Granted researchers agree to participate at events with other CLIMACT participants to present and discuss their projects, and to pass on information that CLIMACT may request to assess the programme ex-post.

Granted researchers must inform CLIMACT about any publications and direct societal activities or outputs resulting from the project as well as any further grants received.

Contact

If you have any questions, please contact calls@climact.ch.

Open access

Grantees should ensure open access to all data and scientific publications (self-archiving or open access publishing) related to their project results.

Ethical and legal compliance

Applicants bear the main responsibility for the planned research project. In particular, they take into account all ethical, legal and societal aspects of the proposed research, and, if granted, they shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations in relations with these matters.